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**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

**FOR THE**

**CITY OF PLEASANT HILL DRAFT GENERAL PLAN**

**January 2003**

**By**

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**Crawford  
Multari &  
Clark**

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**ASSOCIATES**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### Purpose

California planning law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan, which contains seven elements (others may be added as applicable). The City of Pleasant Hill is in the process of updating the entire General Plan. Although General Plans often address environmental issues and provide protections for sensitive resources, they also allow for growth and development. Under some General Plans, growth and development is planned over a relatively wide area and is generally large in scope, which makes the potential for impacts to the environment greater. For these reasons, environmental impact reports (EIRs) are usually prepared for General Plans. A secondary reason for preparing an EIR at the General Plan level is the ability to "tier" future environmental assessment for specific projects off the General Plan EIR. This aids City staff and developers by speeding the environmental review process and identifying focal issues that should be addressed in environmental documentation.

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft EIR evaluates the potential impacts that may result from the adoption and implementation of the Draft Plan for the City of Pleasant Hill (Draft Plan). Section (§) 15378 of the CEQA Guidelines (Guidelines) defines the adoption and amendment of local general plans as a "project" which must be evaluated for potential adverse impacts. An initial environmental study was prepared (Appendix A), which determined that the proposed update could result in potential significant adverse environmental impacts; therefore, an EIR is required.

In accordance with §15121(a) of the Guidelines, the purpose of this Draft EIR is to serve as an informational document that:

*...will inform the public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project...*

### Scope

The Initial Study prepared for the Draft Plan and distributed with the Notice of Preparation concluded that the project could result in potentially significant adverse impacts in the following areas:

- ? Hydrology and Water Quality
- ? Biological Resources
- ? Cultural Resources
- ? Agricultural Resources
- ? Traffic
- ? Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- ? Air Quality
- ? Noise
- ? Public Services and Utilities
- ? Construction Impacts

A scoping meeting was duly noticed and was held August 27<sup>th</sup> at City Hall. No new environmental issues were raised during the course of the meeting.

### Specificity

The analysis in an EIR for a project is necessarily limited by the specificity of the project at the time of review. The Guidelines speak to this issue as follows:

*§15146. Degree of Specificity. The degree of specificity required by an EIR will correspond to the degree of specificity involved in the underlying activity which is described in the EIR.*

*An EIR on a construction project will necessarily be more detailed in the specific effects of the project than will be an EIR on the adoption of a local general plan or comprehensive zoning ordinance because*

*the effects of the construction can be predicted with greater accuracy.*

In part to address various levels of specificity in projects, CEQA allows a number of different types of EIRs, each suitable to a particular project or activity. This document has been prepared as a *Program EIR*. Section 15168 of the Guidelines states that a Program EIR may be prepared for a project which consists of a series of related actions that can be characterized as one large project, such as the adoption of general plan elements and subsequent implementing programs.

Subsequent activities undertaken pursuant to the adopted General Plan would then be examined with respect to the Program EIR to determine what type of additional environmental documents must be prepared. Mitigation measures developed in the Program EIR must be incorporated into subsequent actions conducted in accordance with the new General Plan.

#### **Lead, Responsible and Trustee Agencies**

The Guidelines distinguish among "Lead," "Responsible," and "Trustee" agencies based on their responsibilities for approving or carrying out certain aspects of a project. The City of Pleasant Hill is the Lead Agency for the project because it has the primary responsibility for approving the General Plan and subsequent construction projects. A "Responsible Agency" refers to an agency other than the Lead Agency that has discretionary power to carry out or approve the project. No other agencies have discretionary approval over the Draft Plan pursuant to §15381. However, some agencies may exercise approval authority over permits associated with specific components of the Draft Plan, including Caltrans, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. A "Trustee Agency" refers to a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project but without the legal authority to approve or carry out the project [Guidelines §15386]. Trustee agencies for this project are limited

by law to the California Department of Fish and Game [Guidelines §15386].

#### **Environmental Impact Review Process**

**Notice of Preparation.** Immediately after deciding that an EIR is required, the lead agency must send a Notice of Preparation (NOP) soliciting input on the scope and content of the EIR. The NOP is sent to all "responsible," "trustee," and relevant federal agencies; to the State Clearinghouse, if one or more state agencies is a responsible or trustee agency; and to any other parties previously requesting notice in writing [Guidelines §15082; Public Resources Code §21092.2]. The NOP must also be posted in the office of the County Clerk for 30 days. The NOP was distributed on June 20, 2002 and is included as Appendix A in this document. Comments received in response to the NOP are also included as Appendix A.

**Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) Prepared.** The Draft EIR provides the public and decision-makers with an initial evaluation of potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR must contain the following elements: a table of contents or index; a summary of the findings of the EIR; the project description; the environmental setting; environmental impact analysis; mitigation measures to reduce identified significant adverse impacts; an assessment of significant irreversible environmental changes and growth inducing impacts; an evaluation of cumulative impacts; a description of effects found not to be significant; a discussion of project alternatives; and references.

**Public Notice and Review of Draft EIR.** A lead agency must prepare a Public Notice of Availability (NOA) of a draft EIR. The NOA must be posted in the County Clerk's office for 30 days [Public Resources Code §21092]. The lead agency must send a copy of the notice to anyone requesting it [Guidelines §15087]. Additionally, public notice of the availability of a Draft EIR must be given by at least one of the following methods: 1) publication in a newspaper of general

circulation; 2) posting on and off the project site; or 3) direct mailing to owners and occupants of contiguous property. The lead agency must consult with and request comments on the Draft EIR from responsible and trustee agencies, and adjacent cities and counties, as applicable [Public Resources Code §21104 and 21253]. When a Draft EIR is sent to the State Clearinghouse for review, the public review period must be at least 45 days unless the State Clearinghouse approves a shorter period; in no case may the public review period be less than 30 days [Public Resources Code §21091].

**Scoping Meeting.** Recent legislation has changed the requirements for holding public scoping meetings. Previously, scoping meetings were recommended but not required. To date, scoping meetings are required for projects involving Caltrans, and for projects of “regional, areawide or statewide significance.” The scoping meeting is generally held during the NOP review period or soon thereafter. The scoping meeting for the Pleasant Hill General Plan EIR was held August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

**Notice of Completion.** A Notice of Completion (NOC) states that an EIR has been prepared for a particular project and states where the Draft EIR can be reviewed. The lead agency must file a NOC with the State Clearinghouse as soon as it completes a Draft EIR.

**Final EIR.** A final EIR must include: 1) the Draft EIR; 2) copies of comments received during public review; 3) list of persons and entities commenting; and 4) responses to the comments.

**Certification of Final EIR.** To approve a project for which an EIR has been prepared, the Lead Agency must make certain specific findings that 1) the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, 2) that the Final EIR was presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency, 3) that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR prior to approving a project

[Guidelines §15090], 4) that the conclusions of the Final EIR represent the independent judgment and analysis of the lead agency, and 5) that the Final EIR provides factual evidence that links the significant adverse impacts identified in the Final EIR with the conclusions reached regarding their significance after mitigation.

For each significant impact identified in the Final EIR, the lead agency (and responsible agencies) must find, based on substantial evidence in the record, that 1) the project has been changed to avoid or substantially reduce the magnitude of the impact, 2) changes to the project are within another agency’s jurisdiction and such changes have or should be adopted, or 3) specific legal, technological, economic, social, or other considerations make the mitigation measures or project alternatives infeasible. The lead agency may approve a project for which significant and unavoidable adverse impacts have been identified in the Final EIR. In such cases, findings of overriding considerations must be made by the lead agency, which state that the benefits of the project outweigh the significant unavoidable impacts.

**Lead Agency Project Decision.** A lead agency may: 1) disapprove a project because of its significant environmental effects; 2) require changes in a project to reduce or avoid significant environmental effects; or 3) approve a project in spite of its significant environmental effects, if the proper findings and statement of overriding considerations are adopted [Guidelines §15041 through 15043].

**Mitigation Monitoring/Reporting Program.** When an agency makes findings on significant effects identified in the Final EIR, it must adopt a reporting or monitoring program for mitigation measures that were adopted or made conditions of project approval [Public Resources Code §21081.6].

**Notice of Determination.** An agency must file a Notice of Determination (NOD) after deciding to approve a project for which an EIR is prepared [Guidelines §15094]. A local



agency must file the NOD with the County Clerk. The NOD must be posted for 30 days and sent to anyone previously requesting such notice. Posting of the NOD starts a 30-day statute of limitations on legal challenges to the adequacy of the Final EIR [Public Resources Code §21167(c)].

## 2. SUMMARY

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To aid the public and decision-makers in understanding the findings of an EIR, Guidelines §15123 requires that a summary be provided which discusses the significant environmental effects and mitigation measures, areas of controversy, and issues to be resolved.

### Project Synopsis

The "project" being evaluated by this EIR is development, or buildout, of the City of Pleasant Hill consistent with the revised maps, goals and policies of the Draft Plan. Proposed land use changes in the Land Use Element will have the most direct impact on the environment, and therefore make up the bulk of the analysis in the EIR; however, the other elements of the plan are also considered. The proposed land use changes are shown in *Figures 1 and 2*, and are summarized in *Table 4*. A complete description of the goals, policies and objectives is contained in the Draft Plan, which is incorporated herein by reference. The purpose of the Draft Plan is to provide guidance for land use decisions until 2025.

The proposed changes in land use under the Draft Plan are compared with the existing conditions in *Table 6*.

### Areas of Controversy Known to the Lead Agency

Areas of controversy known to the lead agency at the time of this writing are limited to disagreement among experts over the boundaries of the 100-year floodplain in the City limits and citizen concern over increased density proposed for residential properties, including the former Oak Park Elementary School site and the Mangini/Delu property.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps for this area have been withdrawn and are being reviewed for accuracy. Preliminary revisions

of the maps by FEMA would increase the 100-year floodplain area tenfold, and would therefore increase the number of residences and businesses required to hold flood insurance. The City has hired a consultant to review the maps. The EIR assumes the maps are suspended.

Citizens have voiced concerns over increases in residential density proposed under the Draft Plan. The City developed as relatively low-density, single-family detached dwelling units; however, most neighborhoods are experiencing a physical transition as older homes are renovated and increased in size, and multi-family units are developed to provide housing for seniors and those families who are not able to afford detached housing.<sup>1</sup> The EIR analyzes the current land use mix, which includes a variety of housing types, along with alternatives to the Draft Plan, which include a reduced density alternative.

### Issues to be Resolved

Issues remaining to be resolved are limited to the extent of the floodplain in the City.

### Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

*Table 1* outlines the impacts of the Draft Plan, their levels of significance, mitigation applied to each impact, if applicable, and the residual level of significance.

### Summary of Alternatives

A number of alternatives to the Draft Plan were analyzed in Section 7 of this EIR. A brief outline of each alternative follows.

**No Project (Existing General Plan Land Use and Conservation/Open Space Elements).** This alternative represents the continued growth and development of the City under the existing General Plan. Under this alternative, the buildout population of the City would be approximately 34,355.

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<sup>1</sup> Pleasant Hill General Plan Background Report, 2001.

**Alternative A: Economic Intensification Alternative.** This alternative places greater focus on commercial uses in mixed use areas. Under this alternative, the buildout population of the City would be approximately 34,575.

**Alternative B: Residential Infill Alternative.** This alternative places greater emphasis on residential land uses in mixed use areas. Under this alternative, the buildout population of the City would be approximately 36,853.

**Alternative C: Reduced Density/Open Space Alternative.** This alternative includes reduced-density scenarios for the Mangini/Delu and former Oak Park Elementary School site. Under this alternative, the buildout population of the City would be approximately 35,754-35,951.

Insert Figure 1 – General Plan Land Use Diagram (total picture) – 11x17

Insert Figure 2. Land Use Diagram – Changes from the Existing General Plan. (11x17)

### **Environmentally Superior Alternative**

Based on the analysis contained in the EIR, the Reduced Density/Open Space alternative is considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative. (See also, Section 7, "Alternatives")

**Table 1: Summary of Impacts, Mitigation and Residual Impacts**

Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
<b>Consistency with Relevant Plans</b>				
	Potential inconsistency with policy "8cu" of the Contra Costa County General Plan	Potentially Significant	Amend the Draft Plan to include the following:  "Support efforts of the County to determine the feasibility of constructing fish bypass facilities for flood control drop structures in area creeks"	Less than Significant
	Potential sunset of Measure C in 2008 may invalidate conclusions of the EIR	Potentially Significant	Amend the Draft Plan to include the following:  "If Measure C is allowed to sunset, reevaluate the adequacy of General Plan programs in addressing traffic and public service impacts associated with new development, and perform a new environmental analysis that accounts for the absence of Measure C provisions."	Less than Significant
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b>				
	Continued development within the 100-year flood zone may result in impediment or redirection of storm water flows.	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Safety and Noise Goal 1 et. seq.)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Increased development accommodated by the Draft plan will result in increased impermeable surfaces, which can increase the rate and velocity of runoff.	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Community Development Program 21.2; Growth Management Goal 2 et. seq.)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Continued development in the City will heighten issues associated with storm water as sites are developed or redeveloped.	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Community Development Program 21.2)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Continued development in the City will increase the intensity of land use and may result in a	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Community Development Program	No additional	Less than Significant

Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
	reduction in the quality of surface water.	21.2)		
	Development under the Draft Plan may otherwise adversely affect water quality	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Community Development Program 21.2)	No additional	Less than Significant
<b>Biological Resources</b>				
	Development of vacant and low-density parcels may impact wetlands	Potentially Significant (although addressed by Community Development Program 22.1)	Amend riparian protection goals, policies and programs (under Community Development Goals 21 and 22) to include wetlands.	Less than Significant
	Development under the Draft Plan may indirectly impact riparian areas by increasing risk of runoff and erosion	Less than significant because of policies in the Draft Plan (Community Development Goal 21 and 22 et. seq.)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Development of vacant parcels may directly impact foraging areas for wildlife. Continued growth along riparian areas may indirectly impact the documented range of the California Tiger Salamander by increasing noise, light and density of development.	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Goal 22 et seq.)	Add Program 22.2: "In areas of documented occurrence of the California Tiger Salamander, require site-specific study and mitigation of potential impact. Mitigation may include avoidance of habitat, reduction of habitat disturbance, and offsite or onsite restoration or protection of similar habitat."	Less than Significant
	Continued development under the Draft Plan may result in the development of currently vacant parcels, which may provide value as wildlife corridors, and may result in intensification of development along existing riparian corridors, dissuading species from utilizing corridors.	Potentially Significant (reference previously cited policies in the section)	Amend goals, policies and programs under Community Development Goals 21 and 22, which address riparian protection, to include preservation of migration corridors.	Less than significant.
<b>Cultural Resources</b>				
	Projects under the Draft Plan may have direct and indirect impacts on known resources, and may impact previously undiscovered	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Policy 25A, programs 25.1, 25.2, 25.4, 25.5)	The following program will be added to the Draft Plan:  "Archival study will be completed for all	Less than Significant



Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
	subterranean resources, including human burials.		individual projects proposed to the City. Field study will also be required for those projects on previously undeveloped properties."	
	The Draft Plan may impact historical resources	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Goal 25, Policy 25A, and programs 25.1 through 25.4)	Amend Community Development Program 25.2 to include:  "...with specific consideration of structures 45 years and older."	Less than Significant
<b>Agriculture</b>				
	The Draft Plan will continue single-family zoning on the 25-acre Mangini property, which is underlain by prime and statewide important agricultural soils.	Less than Significant (reference Agricultural Commissioner's Office communication)	None	Less than Significant
<b>Circulation</b>				
	Continued growth in the City of Pleasant Hill will increase traffic volumes, which could result in decreased levels of service	Less than Significant (reference Growth Management Goal 1 et. seq.)	No additional	Less than Significant
	The Draft Plan is consistent with regional traffic planning documents	Less than Significant	No additional	Less than Significant
	Increased density may exacerbate existing traffic safety issues by increasing traffic volume and/or including inappropriate design configurations	Potentially Significant (reference Circulation Goal 1, policy 1A, and programs 1.1-1.3; Circulation Goal 3, policy 3A, programs 3.1-3.3; and Circulation Goal 5, policy 5A, program 5.2, along with Section 35-16.22 of the Municipal Code)	No additional	Less than Significant
	The addition of more than 3,000 people may impact service levels of bus lines, BART and bikeways	Potentially Significant (reference Circulation Goal 4, policies 4A, 4B, and programs 4.1-4.7)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Implementation of the Draft Plan may result in increased demand for parking	Less than significant (reference Section 35-17 of the Municipal Code)	None	Less than Significant
<b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>				
	Continued development in the City will expose	Potentially Significant (reference Safety and	No additional	Less than Significant

Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
	additional persons, including sensitive receptors such as schoolchildren, to the risk of hazardous materials release.	Noise Element program 5.1 and 5.2, along with Municipal Code Section 35-16.14(c))		
	No hazardous materials sites are listed in the City of Pleasant Hill	Less than significant	None	Less than Significant
	Continued development within the airport influence area depicted in the airport land use plan may expose additional persons to safety hazards.	Potentially significant (reference Safety and Noise Goal 2, policy 2A, and programs 2.1 and 7.5)	No additional	Less than Significant
<b>Air Quality</b>				
	The Draft Plan is potentially inconsistent with the CAP	Potentially Significant (reference Section 35-16.14(B) of the Municipal Code)	The following language shall be added under Safety and Noise Goal 8 in the Draft Plan:  "The City shall identify sources of odors and toxics and amend the zoning ordinance to establish buffer zones around sources of odors and toxics. Buffer zones shall be established in consultation with the BAAQMD."	Less than Significant
<b>Noise</b>				
	Continued development proximate to I-680 and BART may expose additional residents to groundbourne noise and vibration	Potentially Significant (reference Safety and Noise Goal 7 et. seq. and Section 36-16.14 (A) of the Municipal Code)	Add Program 7.7:  "Evaluate the impacts of vibration when considering proposed development near I-680"	Less than Significant
	Continued development in the area, including projected increases in vehicle traffic, may increase noise above existing levels. Impacts are potentially significant along Contra Costa Boulevard.	Significant along Contra Costa Boulevard/North Main Street; less than significant in other locations (reference Safety and Noise Policy 7B, also previously cited policies and programs)	Amend the Draft Plan to include the following program:  "Monitor noise along Contra Costa Boulevard/North Main Street and identify appropriate methods to rectify unacceptable noise levels in the vicinity of noise-sensitive uses"	Significant and Unavoidable for Contra Costa Boulevard/ North Main Street
	Continued development within the airport land use planning area will	Less than Significant (reference to previously cited policies and	None	Less than Significant

Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
	expose additional persons to noise from aircraft	programs)		
<b>Public Services and Utilities</b>				
	Additional development under the Draft Plan will increase demand for water.	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Goal 11, Policy 11A, Program 11.1, Growth Management Goal 2, and Policy 2A et seq., Community Development Goal 23, Policy 23A, Program 23.1 and 23.7)	Amend the Draft Plan to include the following Policy:  "Monitor the CCWD's progress towards obtaining additional water supplies. Coordinate with the CCWD to amend the Future Water Supply Study demand projections to accurately reflect the Draft Plan buildout."	Less than Significant
	Development of land uses proposed in the Draft Plan will increase wastewater generation	Less than Significant (reference Community Development Goal 11, Policy 11A, and Program 11.1)	No additional	Less than Significant
	The implementation of the Draft Plan will place additional demand upon police services	Less than Significant (Growth Management Goal 2, Policy 2A, programs 2.1 and 2.2)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Continued development throughout the City would place additional demand on fire services.	Less than Significant (Growth Management Goal 2, Policy 2A, programs 2.1 and 2.2; Safety and Noise Goal 4, Policy 4A, 4B, and programs 4.1-4.3)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Implementation of the Draft Plan would increase solid waste generation and demand for disposal capacity.	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Goal 11, Policy 11A, program 11.2, Policy 23B, and Program 23.6)	Amend Programs 11.2, 23B, and 23.6 to include:  "...with the goal of attaining the mandated 50% diversion rate."	Less than Significant
	Implementation of the Draft Plan will place additional demand upon schools in the area that already experience capacity problems.	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Goal 12, Policy 12A, 12B, Program 12.1, 12.2, Goal 13, Policy 13A-13C, Programs 13.1-13.3; Economic Strategy program 2.1, Policy 4C, program 4.5, Growth Management Policy 2A, programs 2.1 and 2.2)	No additional	Less than Significant
	The implementation of the Draft Plan would increase demand for	Less than Significant	None	Less than Significant

Issue Area	Impact	Level of Significant Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation	Residual Level of Significance
	park and recreational space			
<b>Construction Impacts</b>				
	Projects proposed under the Draft Plan may exceed emissions standards	Potentially Significant (reference Safety and Noise Policy 8C, Program 8.2 and 8.6)	No additional	Significant and Unavoidable
	Projects constructed under the Draft Plan may adversely affect soil stability, leading to increased risk of erosion and landslide. Projects may also encounter unstable soil conditions.	Potentially Significant (reference Safety and Noise Goal 3, Policy 3B, Program 3.1-3.3)	No additional	Less than Significant
	Projects constructed under the Draft Plan may adversely affect water quality and hydrology by altering current flow patterns and reducing infiltration.	Potentially Significant (reference Community Development Project 21.2)	The following program will be added:  "For new development, consider alternatives to impermeable surfaces that will promote gradual infiltration of precipitation."	Less than Significant
	Construction of projects may result in short-term noise audible to sensitive receptors, including residences, libraries, and office buildings.	Potentially Significant (reference Section 35-16.14 et seq. and Section 5-1 of the Municipal Code)	No additional	Less than Significant
	The implementation of the Draft Plan will result in short-term impacts associated with truck haul routes, detours, physical street disturbances, and other consequences of construction that will affect traffic volumes and traffic safety.	Potentially Significant	Amend the Draft Plan as follows:  "Require developers to establish comprehensive construction traffic plans which denote haul routes, detours, and other factors which may impact public safety for approval by City staff."	Less than Significant

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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The Guidelines require that a sufficiently detailed project description be provided to allow meaningful analysis of the project's impacts. The "project" being evaluated by this Draft EIR is development, or buildout<sup>2</sup>, of the City of Pleasant Hill consistent with the revised maps, goals and policies of the Draft Plan. The project proponent is the City of Pleasant Hill. The proposed land use changes are shown in *Figures 1* and *2*, and are summarized in *Tables 4* and *6*. A complete description of the goals, policies and objectives is contained in the Draft Plan, which is incorporated herein by reference. The purpose of the Draft Plan is to provide guidance for land use decisions in the city through 2025.

#### Background

*General Information.* The City of Pleasant Hill is currently preparing an update of the General Plan governing land use in the City. The first Pleasant Hill General Plan was adopted in 1962. The current General Plan was adopted in 1990 and amended as recently as February 1999.

*General Plan Update - Process.* In June 2000, the City Council contracted with a consultant team to assist with updating the Pleasant Hill General Plan. In April 2001, the team published a Background Report describing conditions in the city. Following publication of the Background Report, a 19-person citizen task force (appointed by the City Council to represent the range of perspectives in Pleasant Hill) met ten times from May 2001 through May 2002 to determine how the new General Plan should address these and other issues. The General Plan Policy Task Force included two representatives from the City Council, two from the Planning Commission, one from the Mount Diablo Unified School District, one

from Diablo Valley Community College, one from the Pleasant Hill Recreation and Park District, one from the Chamber of Commerce, a local high school student, a member of the Traffic Safety Committee, a representative of the Committee on Aging, a representative of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on redevelopment, a representative of the Education and Schools Advisory Committee, and three citizens appointed at large.

In addition to formulating the goals, policies and programs of the new General Plan, the Task Force considered in detail potential land uses at five key locations in the city and made the following recommendations for future development:

- ✍ *Contra Costa Boulevard - Facilitate private redevelopment with clustered, higher quality retail, restaurant, convenience, and services uses.*
- ✍ *Contra Costa Shopping Center (former Ward's site) - Redesignation from Commercial and Retail to Mixed Use with residential density and nonresidential intensity to be determined under a specific plan that includes both vertical and horizontal integration of uses.*
- ✍ *DVC Plaza (K-Mart) Shopping Center - Retain neighborhood retail, and encourage college-related uses, such as faculty and student housing, parking, cafes, food, and books, as well as open space along the Contra Costa Canal.*
- ✍ *Mangini/Delu Property - Allow single-family housing under the current zoning.*
- ✍ *Former Oak Park Elementary School Site - Devote the majority to flood retention and green space, and allow up to 96 residential units.*

*Plan Format.* The California Constitution allows cities to regulate land use planning, zoning, subdivision and building on private property to promote the health, safety and welfare of the public. State law requires

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<sup>2</sup> "Buildout" is defined in the Draft Plan as "Development of land to its full potential or theoretical capacity as permitted under current or proposed planning or zoning designations."

each city to prepare and adopt a “comprehensive, long-term General Plan for the physical development” of the community. Intended to guide local decision-makers, the General Plan expresses community goals about the future distribution and character of land uses and activities, both public and private.

According to General Plan law, the General Plan should be comprehensive, covering the local jurisdiction’s entire planning area while addressing the broad range of issues facing the community, including physical, social, aesthetic and economic concerns.

The General Plan must also be internally consistent, bearing no policy conflicts between the elements (required and optional). The General Plan must be a long-term document, establishing development policies to serve as the basis for day-to-day land use decision-making within an approximate 20-year timeframe.

Planning and development issues do not necessarily follow political boundaries; therefore, the law provides for including in a city’s general plan “any land outside its boundaries which, in the planning agency’s judgment, bears relation to its planning.” The Draft Plan covers the incorporated area of the city and unincorporated areas in the City’s Sphere of Influence (SOI) – Pacheco and the southwest hills – that could be annexed into the city and receive City services.

The County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) establishes spheres of influence to denote areas under County jurisdiction where a city has a shared concern regarding land use and development. Annexation of land in the Pleasant Hill SOI is anticipated to occur only when desired by residents of a subject area

Table 2. General Plan Elements		
Pleasant Hill GP Elements	Required GP Elements	Examples of Topics Covered
Community Development	Land Use, Conservation, Open Space	Development patterns, neighborhoods, visual character, public facilities, recreation, open space, hillsides, riparian areas, sensitive plants and animals, cultural and historic resources
Economic Strategy	<i>Optional</i>	Commercial and industrial land uses, economic diversification, job opportunities, tourism
Circulation	Circulation	Traffic, street network, parking, transit services, bike routes
Growth Management	<i>Required by Measure C</i>	Traffic levels of service, regional transportation planning
Safety and Noise	Safety, Noise	Development in hazardous areas, hazardous waste management, seismicity, flood control, water quality, noise
Housing	Housing	Demographics, housing needs, affordability, constraints on production

and if expected to provide economic benefits to the City.

Each General Plan must include policies for each of the following elements:

- ✍ **Land use** – designating the general distribution and intensity of land uses, including housing, business, industry, open space, education, and public facilities.
- ✍ **Circulation** – identifying the general location and nature of existing and proposed highways, arterial and collector roadways, transit terminals, and other transportation facilities.
- ✍ **Conservation** – addressing treatment of natural and cultural resources, including wetlands, trees, rivers, archeological remains, and historic structures.
- ✍ **Housing** – assessing the current and projected housing needs of all segments of the community and identifying land to provide adequate housing to meet those needs.

- ✍ **Noise** – appraising noise sources in the community and developing ways to mitigate nuisances.
- ✍ **Open Space** – detailing techniques for preserving open space areas for natural resources, outdoor recreation, public health and safety, and agricultural activities.
- ✍ **Safety** – establishing policies to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, fire and other hazards.

*Table 2* illustrates how the required General Plan elements are organized. In addition to the topics required by State law, the Draft Plan contains a Growth Management Element to comply with Contra Costa County Measure C (approved 1988). This additional element establishes policies requiring adequate services to be in place prior to approval of new development. The Draft Plan also includes an Economic Strategy Element aimed at optimizing commercial diversity and business opportunities in the city. The Housing Element follows a slightly different format than the other elements in order to comply with State requirements, including the provision that each program include a quantified objective (where applicable).

Each General Plan element contains goals, policies and programs that set a course for future land use in the city. **Goals** summarize how development and future growth should be directed by identifying physical, economic and/or social ends that the community wishes to achieve. The accompanying **policies** establish basic courses of action for the Planning Commission and City Council to follow in working to achieve the community goals. (Policies directly guide the response of elected and appointed officials to development proposals and related community actions.) Finally, **programs** are identified that will need to be implemented by City departments to carry out the policies and achieve the goals of the Draft Plan.

The Land Use Element of the Draft Plan outlines land use designations, the application of such designations to properties, and their associated densities. Based on these designations, densities, and trends in development, calculations are performed which result in a “development potential” for the City. The development potential under the Draft Plan is outlined in *Table 4*. A comparison of the existing conditions in 2002 and the proposed land use pattern in 2025 is included in *Table 5*. This EIR analyzes the potential adverse environmental consequences of projected development in relation to existing conditions as put forth in *Table 6*. The EIR also analyzes the impacts of particular policies and programs as they relate to the environment.

### Location of the Planning Area

Pleasant Hill is located in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area of California and is bordered to the south by Walnut Creek, the west and northwest by Martinez, the east by Concord, and the north by the unincorporated community of Pacheco. The Draft Plan applies to land within the City limits of Pleasant Hill and lands within the City SOI, generally associated with the community of Pacheco and areas in the southwest hills.

### Project Objectives

Project objectives for a General Plan often consist of goals and vision statements. These statements often provide the underlying reasoning for undertaking an update. Other objectives, which are economic and housing-related, are also included.

The objectives for the project, as defined under the CEQA Guidelines, consist of the goals of the Draft Plan, which are summarized here and can be read in full in the plan text.

**Community Development** - Goals for Community Development address balance of land use types, use of vacant land, preservation of neighborhoods, the city's image and aesthetic, connectivity, public services, quality of life, recreation, and natural resources.

**Economic Strategy** - These goals address economic health and potential.

**Circulation** - The goals in this element address system efficiency, safety, speeding, congestion, pedestrians and access for the disabled.

**Growth Management** - The Growth Management Element meets the requirements of Measure C; goals in this element address land use allocation and development as it relates to public services and adopted performance standards.

**Safety and Noise** - The goals in this element address flooding, airport operations, fire, seismic hazards, hazardous substances, noise, and air quality.

**Housing** - The Housing Element address the number and diversity of housing types to be provided under the General Plan.

### Project Characteristics – Existing and Proposed Conditions

**Existing General Plan.** The existing General Plan for the City of Pleasant Hill includes land use policies, land use allocations, and development standards. The existing General Plan has been amended since its adoption in 1990. *Table 3* outlines the land use categories and corresponding acreages designated in the existing General Plan, as amended to date.

Table 3. 1990 General Plan Land Use Distribution (as amended 1999)			
Land Use Designation	Parcels	Acres	% of Total Acreage
SF Low	399	316.4	8.2%
SF Medium	4,025	1,355.5	35.1%
SF High	4,204	796.0	21%

Table 3. 1990 General Plan Land Use Distribution (as amended 1999)			
Land Use Designation	Parcels	Acres	% of Total Acreage
Single-Family Subtotal	8,628	2,467.9	64%
MF Low	1,380	126.9	3.3%
MF Medium	883	83.3	2.2%
MF High	11	12.7	0.2%
Multi-Family Subtotal	2,274	222.9	5.8%
Commercial & Retail	279	239.9	6.2%
Office	98	84.2	2.2%
Mixed Use	175	42.6	1.1%
Light Industrial	20	34.2	0.8%
Park	26	154.8	4%
Open Space	15	252.8	6.5%
Semi-public & Inst.	53	107.5	2.8%
School	19	254.4	6.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,587</b>	<b>3,861.2</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority of the planning area's acreage under the existing General Plan (64%) is devoted to single-family residential land uses, followed by school land, open space, and commercial and retail uses (approximately 6% each).

**Draft Plan.** The Draft Plan is the project being analyzed in this EIR. The Draft Plan contains goals, policies and programs designed to guide land use decisions in the City, similar to the existing General Plan. However, the Draft Plan includes several land use changes that will affect the buildout potential of the community. The changes proposed in the Draft Plan are described in general in the following paragraphs.

**General Goals** – The Draft Plan contains general goals to guide planning in the City. These goals are outlined earlier in this section as project objectives.

**General Land Use Changes** – The major differences between the Draft Plan and the existing General Plan in terms of land use include:

- ? Increases in Mixed Use, with reductions in exclusively commercial space



- ? Increases in land designated for medium and high density multi-family residential use
- ? Creation of two new land use designations – Multifamily Very Low and Neighborhood Business

*Proposed Land Use Designations and Land Use Mix* – Table 4 outlines the land use designations and corresponding acreages proposed in the Draft Plan (see also Figure 1). Table 4 also outlines the changes in land use, in acres, from the existing General Plan. The reader is reminded that the EIR analyzes the changes over the existing built environment, not the changes from the existing General Plan. The 1990 General Plan (as amended) is analyzed as the “no project” alternative in Section 7.

As shown in Table 4, implementation of the Draft Plan would result in the following land use changes:

- ? A change of 6.3 acres from high-density single family and 76.6 acres of multi-family low to multi-family very low density.
- ? Redesignation of 101.3 acres of commercial space to 74.6 acres of mixed use, 22.8 acres of neighborhood business and 3.9 acres of high density multi-family residential.

The Draft Plan also includes comprehensive updates to the Housing Element, and policies and programs throughout the other elements.

Land Use Designation	Parcels	Acres	% of Total Acreage	Change from 1990 GP
SF Low	399	316.4	8.2%	0
SF Medium	4,025	1,355.5	35.1%	0
SF High	4,191	789.7	20.5%	(6.3)
<i>Single-Family Subtotal</i>	<i>8,615</i>	<i>2,416.6</i>	<i>64.8%</i>	
MF Very Low*	570	82.9	2.1%	82.9
MF Low	823	50.3	1.3%	(76.6)
MF Medium	883	83.3	2.2%	0
MF High	13	16.6	0.4%	3.9
<i>Multi-Family Subtotal</i>	<i>2,289</i>	<i>233.1</i>	<i>6.0%</i>	
Commercial & Retail	186	138.6	3.6%	(101.3)
Neighborhood Business*	28	22.8	0.6%	22.8
Office	98	84.2	2.2%	0
Mixed Use	238	117.2	3.0%	74.6
Light Industrial	20	34.2	0.8%	0
Park	26	154.8	4%	0
Open Space	15	252.8	6.5%	0
Semi-public & Inst.	53	107.5	2.8%	0
School	19	254.4	6.6%	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,587</b>	<b>3,861.2</b>	<b>100%**</b>	<b>0</b>
* = Proposed designation				
** = Actual result 101% due to rounding				

**Existing Conditions (2002 Built Space).** The City of Pleasant Hill is largely built out under the current General Plan. However, a small amount of acreage remains vacant and some parcels are not built to their highest allowable density. Table 5 outlines the developed conditions in the City in 2002; Table 5 therefore constitutes the baseline condition against which impacts will be weighed. Pursuant to CEQA, the impacts of the Draft Plan must be assessed against the conditions existing at the time of distribution of the NOP (not against the existing General Plan).

Table 5. Existing Conditions (2002)				
General Plan Designation	Allowed Density	Existing Development		
		SF Units	MF Units	Comm. Sq. Ft.
SF Low	1.3-3.0	377	2	
SF Medium	3.1-4.5	3,948	130	378
SF High	4.6-6.9	4,177	30	63,417
MF Low	7.0-19.9	45	1,736	
MF Medium	20.0-29.9	10	1,512	72,655
MF High	30-40	8	396	93,012
Commercial & Retail	0.4	3	551	2,328,433
Office	0.4	3	193	863,889
Mixed Use	14.0/0.75		285	290,509
Light Industrial	0.33			365,043
Semi-public & Inst.				259,163
<b>Total</b>		<b>8,571</b>	<b>4,835</b>	<b>4,336,499</b>
<b>Source:</b> City of Pleasant Hill Community Development Department				

The 2000 census estimates the City population as 32,837 persons. Parks, open space, public institutions, and schools are already provided or built out under 1990 General Plan designations.

**Buildout.** The Draft Plan will alter the buildout scenario of the City of Pleasant Hill. Buildout is based, in part, on the following four factors:

- ? Acreage associated with each land use designation
- ? Densities and building floor area ratios associated with each land use designation
- ? The number of new parcels that can be created
- ? Assumptions of persons per dwelling unit
- ? Shape of lots & other constraints that limit development

The determination of buildout is also based on trends in a particular community. Assumptions can be made as to the likely percentage of the maximum allowable densities at which parcels will be built, based on community trends. In the Draft Plan, changes are small enough, and the amount of remaining vacant land discrete enough, that site-specific analysis of buildout potential is possible. Buildout is

therefore based in part on site-specific assessment of conditions and surrounding development; no blanket percentage of maximum density is applied.

The buildout of the Draft Plan is outlined in *Table 4*. The buildout is analyzed in reference to the existing conditions to determine the remaining development potential accommodated by the Draft Plan. *Table 6* compares the existing conditions and the proposed buildout. *Table 6* uses existing and proposed unit numbers from the City, and population numbers from the 2000 Census. The projections result from application of the following Census population factors: 2.53 persons per single family unit and 2.05 persons per multi-family unit. It is important to note that application of the Census population factors to the City's existing unit counts yields a population of 31,597 persons; the 2000 Census population of 32,837 is considered the baseline in this analysis.

Table 6. Existing Conditions vs. Draft Plan - Development and Population		
Unit/Square Footage Type	Existing	Proposed New Units (2025)
SF Units	8,571	232
MF Units	4,835	1,322
Commercial Sq. Ft.	3,971,456	465,043
Light Industrial Sq. Ft.	365,043	0
Total Population	32,837*	36,092
<b>Source:</b> Pleasant Hill Community Development Department, 2001, unless noted * 2000 Census		

Due to the limited inventory of vacant land, CMCA and city staff were able to look at each parcel and determine a reasonable development potential based on site-specific factors such as topography, roadways, odd sizes, etcetera. Therefore, *Table 6* represents a "real-world" estimate of buildout potential for the city, as opposed to a more general estimate that would be based solely on applying maximum densities to the number of acres and/or parcels.

### Construction Approach and Schedule

The Draft Plan and Land Use Element will be implemented through 2025, with

construction occurring as demand, services, finances, and other factors permit.

### Discretionary Approvals Required

The implementation of the Draft Plan involves some ongoing discretionary actions by the City of Pleasant Hill through the review of permit applications and program proposals. Other discretionary approvals will be linked to specific natural resource and/or permit issues under the jurisdiction of other agencies such as Caltrans, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

### Cumulative Growth Considered in this EIR

By its nature, a General Plan provides a comprehensive, cumulative picture of growth for the planning area. The Draft Plan includes not only areas within the City limits but also within the SOI. The Draft Plan also takes into consideration regional issues such as traffic and air quality through consistency with regional plans.

Sources of growth in the area, which may not be addressed through regional plans, include enrollment at Diablo Valley College (DVC). Growth projections for DVC are assessed on a year-by-year basis, depending on the state budget, demand, and the general economic climate. For the past seven to eight years, annual growth has totaled approximately 3% per year. Currently, growth occurs mainly at off-campus locations; the Pleasant Hill campus is near maximum capacity. DVC currently services approximately 20,000 students in Pleasant Hill, with an additional 4,500 students on other campuses.

Staff anticipates a variety of new schedule offerings that may result in use of the main campus that is more efficient. Staff therefore suggests a 3% per year increase in student numbers as a reasonable estimate of future growth.<sup>3</sup> However, application of

a 3 percent per year growth rate over the horizon of the Draft Plan (approximately 25 years) yields a student population that is more than double the existing enrollment (41,875). It is unlikely, given existing constraints on the main campus, that service of such a population on the physical campus would be feasible. It is further likely that growth will continue to be greater on off-campus locations and in distance learning.

Due to the uncertainties of growth at DVC stemming from fiscal and physical constraints, the City has determined that incorporation of DVC growth into the cumulative analysis in the Draft Plan or this EIR is neither feasible nor reasonable.

Although growth at DVC is not included in the cumulative analysis, the general plan does not ignore DVC and its impact to the community. In addition to addressing regional traffic and public service impacts through the Growth Management Element, the Draft Plan contains the following policy and program language regarding DVC:

*Community Development Program 4.1. In efforts to define the City's image, emphasize:*

*✎ The community's dedication to education, including the presence of Diablo Valley College and its potential to provide cultural and lifelong learning opportunities.*

**Community Development Goal 13. Facilitate lifelong learning and promote coordinated residential and school development.**

Community Development Policy 13A. Improve communication and cooperative interaction among the City, School District, pre-schools, Diablo Valley College, and the Recreation and Park District.

Community Development Policy 13B. Establish strong physical and cultural

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<sup>3</sup> Terry Shoaf, Diablo Valley College, personal

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communication, July 2, 2002 (e-mail)

connections between the City, Diablo Valley College, and local schools that result in creative, proactive opportunities for cooperation.

*Community Development Program 13.2. Establish a Diablo Valley College liaison to address issues of mutual concern and potential community-wide benefit.*

*Economic Strategy Program 2.7. Work with Diablo Valley College, Cal State Hayward, and other regional educational institutions to tailor job-training programs to local businesses (including service, retail, finance, insurance, real estate, local government, education, and transportation).*

## 4. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

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### Historical Context and Location

Located in central Contra Costa County, the City of Pleasant Hill covers 8.2 square miles (including 2 square miles of roads) and had an estimated 32,937 residents in the 2000 Census. The city is bordered to the south by the City of Walnut Creek, to the north by Martinez and Pacheco, to the east by Concord, and to the west by Lafayette.

The name Pleasant Hill derives from the Spanish “reliez” used in an 1848 survey to describe the area. Most of the city actually lies on an alluvial plain at the eastern edge of the Briones Hills, which rise to 1,400 feet.

The Bolbone and Chupacane cultures inhabited the area before settlers arrived from Mexico in the late 1700s. Settlers in 1846 reported Bolbone Indians living in Diablo Valley in 1846 (Clayton Historical Society, website). In 1844, Irish immigrant William Welch became the only non-Mexican to obtain a land grant in the region. His Rancho Las Juntas contained more than 13,000 acres, including present-day Pleasant Hill. Early residents primarily cultivated grains such as wheat, hay and barley, which were shipped to market via Pacheco Creek. The Walnut Creek area, including Pleasant Hill was first known as “The Corners,” because of the convergence of the two roads leading from Pacheco and Lafayette (Realty World Website-History of Walnut Creek).

Other transportation options emerged with the Southern Pacific Rail line in 1891 (now the site of the Iron Horse Trail) and the Caldecott Tunnel in 1937. The first residential subdivisions in Pleasant Hill were built in the 1920s and 1930s south of Gregory Lane and west of Contra Costa Boulevard. The city grew significantly with new single-family subdivisions north of Gregory Lane between 1946 and 1954. When Pleasant Hill incorporated in 1961, about half of the existing buildings in the city were in place.

The opening of Interstate 680 in 1964 helped spur construction. Multifamily projects built in the 1970s along Chilpancingo Parkway (named for Pleasant Hill's sister city in Mexico) began to change the city from a community of single-family detached houses. Subsequent transportation improvements (including Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Interstate 680 widening, and Taylor Boulevard) promoted additional higher-intensity multifamily and nonresidential development in and around Pleasant Hill. The most significant recent developments in the city are the new downtown and multifamily housing for seniors directly to the south.

Pleasant Hill historically has been a suburban residential community serving major employment centers to the west and south, and the pattern of residents commuting outside the city to work is expected to continue (the city would need 185 new jobs per year to achieve a 1:1 ratio of jobs to housing). However, regional growth in the last decade has transformed Pleasant Hill, as evidenced by recent higher density residential and commercial development, especially downtown. Future rates of development are expected to be more modest because the city is approaching buildout.

The city economy is dependent on service and retail employment, and its revenue-generating base is limited. Less than 10 percent of developed land is devoted to revenue-generating commercial, office, or industrial uses. Of the roughly 200 undeveloped acres in the city, only about 5 acres are available for non-residential use. However, several large sites have potential for redevelopment, including the 19-acre Contra Costa Shopping Center (former Montgomery Ward's Site) east of Interstate 680, and the DVC Plaza (K-Mart) Shopping Center and other commercial plazas along Contra Costa Boulevard.

The City provides engineering, building inspection, planning, redevelopment, police, street construction and maintenance, and storm drainage services.

Fire protection, recreation and park, sewage collection and treatment, school and water services are provided through special districts not subject to City control.

The first Pleasant Hill General Plan was adopted in 1962. The current General Plan was adopted in 1990 and amended as recently as February 1999. Prior to implementation of the 1991 Downtown Plan, the community lacked a central commercial core. The Plan called for replacing traditional commercial development with mixed-use projects on short blocks to promote a pedestrian atmosphere and to provide a central gathering place for the community with trees, water, recreation places, streetscape amenities and public art.

## Regional Access

Major regional access points exist along

Population trends over the last ten years and ABAG projections are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7. ABAG Population Estimates and Projections, 1990-2020							
Population	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
City	31,583	31,500	32,837	34,400	35,000	35,400	36,200
Change		-83	1,800	1,100	600	400	800
Percent Change		-0.26%	4.24%	4.76%	1.74%	1.14%	2.26%
Annual Rate of Change		-0.05%	0.83%	0.93%	0.35%	0.23%	0.45%
Sphere of Influence (Outside City)	5,023	5,100	5,100	5,100	5,100	5,100	5,100
Change		77	0	0	0	0	0
Percent Change		1.53%	0	0	0	0	0
Annual Rate of Change		0.30%	0	0	0	0	0

Source: ABAG Projections 2000, U.S. Census

Interstate 680, and Highways 4 and 24. Interstate 680 connects commuters with points north and south in the Bay Area. Highway 4 is the major east-west link across the County. Highway 24 connects Pleasant Hill to Oakland and the Bay Bridge, and joins Interstate 680 in Walnut Creek, diverging in the Pleasant Hill area to connect with SR-4 via SR 242. Local streets experience a significant amount of traffic from commuters attempting to bypass freeway and highway traffic at peak periods.

## Climate

The local climate is characterized by cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The average annual temperature is 56°F, with average daily temperatures ranging from 45°F in January to 68°F in September.

## Population

All of the population growth in Pleasant Hill in the 1990s occurred in the second half of the decade. (ABAG estimates indicate that the city population actually declined slightly from 1990-1995.) From 1995-2000, the city grew almost 6 percent, an annual rate of 1.12 percent. This growth rate is expected to decrease to 0.65 percent between 2000 and 2005 and even less in later years. By 2020, the final year of current ABAG projections, Pleasant Hill is expected to have 36,200 people living within the city limits. [Note: population according to the census is used as the existing condition in this EIR].

Population in the SOI has remained steady since 1995 and is expected to remain steady for the foreseeable future.

## Consistency with Other Relevant Plans

A number of planning documents exist which are relevant to the current planning effort; they include:

### Land Use Documents

#### Contra Costa County General Plan (Central District)

The Contra Costa County General Plan contains the following policies that may pertain to the City of Pleasant Hill and/or its SOI:

*"3-128. In cooperation with Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, and transit operators, determine the feasibility of establishing bus service along the SPRR [Southern Pacific Railroad] right-of-way between Concord and Rudgear Road."*

**GP Response:** The Draft Plan contains policies that call for continued cooperation on bus service issues (Circulation Program 4.2, and 4.3). Specifics regarding the bus route are outside of the purview of the Draft Plan.

*"3-155. [The County General] plan strongly supports the intent of the Briones Hills*

*Agricultural Preservation Area compact that was signed by the County and the cities of Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Orinda, Richmond, Pinole, and Hercules in 1988.*

*The compact states that the jurisdictions voluntarily agree not to annex any lands within the 64 square mile area for the purposes of allowing urban development (see Figure 3A). This rural area includes large properties owned by either the East Bay Municipal Utility District or the East Bay Regional Park District, which are designated "Watershed" and "Parks and Recreation" on the General Plan land use map. The remaining properties are used primarily for grazing cattle and are designated "Agricultural Lands." [The County General] plan anticipates that the area will remain in public and agricultural use during the planning period."*

**GP Response:** The Draft Plan does not change land use patterns or otherwise intensify development in this area.

*"8cu. Reevaluate the flood control drop structures and long spillways that have been constructed in many of the creeks in North Central County (Walnut Creek, Concord, and Pleasant Hill) to determine the feasibility of constructing fish bypass facilities which would allow anadromous species access to inland spawning sites."*

**GP Response:** The Draft Plan contains policies that support creek protection and enhancement, although it does not contain policies specific to anadromous fish or fish bypass facilities. The following policy shall be added to the Draft Plan to ensure consistency with Contra Costa County General Plan policies:

*"Support efforts of the County to determine the feasibility of constructing fish bypass facilities for flood control drop structures in area creeks."*

**Pacheco** – The Contra Costa County General Plan addresses land use in the Pacheco area and other portions of the SOI.

**GP Response:** The Draft Plan does not propose changes in land use in portions of the SOI. The Draft Plan contains policy language that allows for annexation only if it is "mutually desired by the city and adjacent residents." Therefore, the Draft Plan does not conflict with land use policy for areas within the SOI.

Furthermore, the Draft Plan does not proposed new land uses near County borders that may conflict with existing land uses. Conflicting land uses could include industrial, agricultural, or certain commercial land use.

Overall, the Draft Plan is consistent with the County General Plan.

#### Measure C

[The following information regarding both Measures C is excerpted from the County General Plan]

**Measure C - 1988** added one-half cent to the sales tax within the County to fund needed transportation improvements. Approximately 18 percent of the approximately \$800 million collected through the 20-year term of the tax can be allocated to cities and the County if they have adopted Growth Management Elements in their local General Plans. The measure sets forth specific intersection traffic service levels keyed to land use type. In general, the lowest levels of service are allowed in the highest density areas (central business district) and highest in the lowest density areas (rural). Projects that would affect traffic service levels at intersections must include mitigation measures for the effects, or they cannot be approved. Additional standards for sewer water, storm drainage, police, fire, and parks must also be included in local General Plans, although the measure gives these services to the local agency.



The current law sunsets in 2008, efforts are currently underway to draft a new resolution for the ballot.

*GP Response:* The Draft Plan includes the required Growth Management Element, establishing standards for services, and requiring review of projects for impacts to such services. The Draft Plan is therefore consistent with Measure C.

The current law sunsets in 2008; sunset of the law without adoption of a similar measure would invalidate a number of the conclusions contained in this EIR. The conclusions in the EIR regarding traffic and public services rely heavily on the planning framework established by Measure C. Sunset of this law would also have adverse consequences for the Draft Plan, which would require substantial amendment. The following mitigation is recommended:

"If Measure C is allowed to sunset, reevaluate the adequacy of General Plan programs in addressing traffic and public service impacts associated with new development, and perform a new environmental analysis that accounts for the absence of Measure C provisions."

*Measure C – 1990* established a 65/35 Land Preservation Standard that limits urban development to no more than 35 percent of the land in the County and preserves at least 65 percent of land in the County for agriculture, open space, wetlands, parks and other non-urban uses. The urban areas within cities (and the urban growth of cities in the County) are factored into this 35 percent ceiling for urban growth in the County. (See Land Use, Open Space Elements – County General Plan.)

*GP Response:* The City of Pleasant Hill is included as an urban area in the 35% ceiling; continued growth in the city will not inhibit the ability of the County to comply with Measure C – 1990.

Measure C - 1990 also provides that the County shall, to the maximum extent feasible, enter into preservation agreements

with cities in the County designed to preserve land for agriculture, open space, wetlands and parks. It also provides for County - City cooperation on growth policies through the annexation and incorporation process. (See Section 3; Land Use Element – County General Plan.)

*GP Response:* The Draft Plan contains policies that support the preservation of parks, creeks, and natural resources. The Draft Plan acknowledges the annexation and incorporation process as it relates to Pacheco. The Draft Plan does not conflict with these portions of Measure C.

The Draft Plan is considered consistent with both Measures C.

#### Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) Annexation Policies

[The following information regarding Contra Costa County LAFCO is largely excerpted from the County General Plan.]

LAFCO has been charged with discouraging sprawl while encouraging orderly development of urban areas throughout California since its inception in 1963. LAFCO is a seven-member commission comprised of two city council members, two supervisor members, two special district members and one public member.

The Knox-Nisbet Act, the District Reorganization Act and the Municipal Organization Act require LAFCO to decide on proposals for the incorporation of cities, the annexation or detachment of territory from a city, the consolidation of two or more cities, the formation of a special district, and the dissolution, reorganization, consolidation or merger of a special district.

In addition, the Commission has the responsibility of determining the sphere of influence, or ultimate service area boundary, of each city and special district in the County.

Development within a city's SOI may be approved and constructed under County

jurisdiction or a developer may request that a project involving property within the SOI be approved and annexed into the city. A city must then adopt a General Plan designation for the property (if the city's General Plan does not already indicate a designation for it) and pre-zone the parcel (indicate what the zoning will be when it is annexed). The County LAFCO then votes on the annexation request.

*GP Response:* The Draft Plan does not propose or otherwise outwardly support annexation of land or amendment of the SOI. The General Plan specifically states that annexation would only be pursued if desired by the local residents. The Draft Plan is considered consistent with LAFCO annexation policies.

#### Airport Land Use Plan

The Draft Plan addresses the importance of the land use planning framework for the airport and its impacts on the City. A number of policies address coordination issues, and increased public knowledge and involvement in airport planning. The Draft Plan does not contain land use designations that outwardly conflict with the airport plan; determination of conflict is made on a project-by-project basis. More information regarding consistency with the Airport Land Use Plan can be found in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section, and the Noise section. The Draft Plan is considered consistent with the Airport Land Use Plan.

#### Pleasant Hill Park and Recreation District Master Plan (in progress)

The Parks and Recreation District is in the initial stages of developing a Master Plan for their facilities. Opportunities for development of new parks are limited by the lack of vacant land in Pleasant Hill, especially parcels of sufficient size to support community recreational facilities such as soccer fields. Park District staff note opportunities for development of parks on the Mangini and the Former Oak Park

Elementary School Site.<sup>4</sup> Policies in the Draft Plan address provision of park space on these parcels and throughout the community.

#### Environmental Policy Documents

Consistency with the environmental documents is discussed in each applicable section, as noted.

- ? Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Clean Air Plan (2000) and CEQA Guidelines (1999) – Air Quality Section
- ? Bay Area Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) (1998) – Traffic Section
- ? Contra Costa Clean Water Program (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase I) – Hydrology and Water Quality Section
- ? TRANSPAC Action Plans – Traffic Section
- ? Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Basin Plan – Hydrology and Water Quality Section

Specific information regarding the environmental conditions at the time of this writing can be found at the beginning of each analysis topic.

#### **Conclusion**

The Draft Plan is consistent with regional planning efforts with the amendments above.

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<sup>4</sup> Bob Berggren, Director, pers. comm.

## 5. IMPACT ANALYSIS

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Predicting the environmental effects of the Draft Plan necessarily involves some degree of speculation. This is due in part to the programmatic nature of the Draft Plan, in that the Draft Plan provides general guidance for future specific projects. Environmental review is being conducted at this time so that potential environmental impacts may be identified as early as possible and mitigation measures can be incorporated into future projects as required by §15004 (b) of the Guidelines, which states:

*Choosing the precise time for CEQA compliance involves a balancing of competing factors. EIRs and Negative Declarations should be prepared as early as feasible in the planning process to enable environmental considerations to influence project program and design and yet late enough to provide meaningful information for environmental assessment.*

As specific projects are implemented throughout the life of the Draft Plan, further environmental review will be performed which will identify site- and project-specific impacts in more detail.

Each of the impact analysis sections is organized in the following manner:

**Issue Area.** The specific issue area within the larger topic heading is identified. The potential impacts are summarized.

**Setting.** This subsection describes the existing environmental conditions and regulatory structure pertinent to each issue area.

**Significance Thresholds.** This subsection establishes thresholds by which a determination of significance will be made. Thresholds set quantitative or qualitative standards or criteria for a particular resource. These standards are then used to compare the environmental setting of the resource with and without the project to determine whether the impact is significant.

The thresholds used in this report are generally a combination of the Guidelines, expert opinion, and significance criteria established in other local environmental documents.

**Impacts.** This subsection analyzes the impacts of buildout of the Draft Plan. Impacts identified in this section include direct, indirect, short-term, and long-term impacts of the project. Due to the regional nature of this project, the Draft Plan is considered the cumulative scenario. The specificity of impacts is directly proportional to the specificity of the project being analyzed; because the project in this case is a long-term, regional plan, impacts are general in nature.

**Policies which Address Potential Impacts.** Planning documents contain policies and programs that may reduce the significance of identified impacts. Where applicable, these policies and programs are identified.

**Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation measures are additions to the project that lessen or eliminate impacts. Mitigation measures attempt to be feasible and meaningful yet are constrained by the general nature of the Draft Plan. Mitigation measures for General Plan EIRs often consist of additions to policy language or additional programs.

**Residual Impacts.** This subsection describes the level of significance of impacts after application of mitigation measures.

Impacts are categorized according to their level of significance. Four categories of impacts are identified:

**Significant and Unavoidable.** These impacts cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. To approve a project resulting in significant and unavoidable impacts, the CEQA Guidelines require decision makers to make findings of overriding consideration that "...specific legal, technological, economic, social, or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or alternatives identified in the EIR..."

**Significant but Mitigable.** These impacts can be mitigated to a level of insignificance by measures identified in this EIR and the project description. When approving a project with significant but mitigable impacts, the decision-makers must make findings that changes or alternatives to the project have been incorporated that reduce the impacts to a less than significant level.

**Less than Significant.** Less than significant impacts are adverse but not significant.

**Beneficial Impacts.** Beneficial impacts are the environmental impacts of the implementation of the Draft Plan that would result in positive change to the environment.

## 5.1 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

### DRAINAGE AND FLOODING

#### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan would result in additional development in areas with potential for flooding and with inadequate stormwater conveyance structures.

#### Setting

A portion of eastern Pleasant Hill is within the 100-year flood hazard zone, which is closely associated with Grayson Creek. The extent of the 100-year flood zone is currently being disputed; the actual boundary is not clear at the time of this writing.

Flooding near Grayson Creek occurs mainly because of limited channel capacity and drainage facilities that become blocked by debris during high-intensity rainfall events. A 2000 Federal Emergency Management Agency study indicates that with increased runoff due to continued urbanization, historic flood protection measures are no longer sufficient to convey a 100-year flood event (a flood with a one percent chance of occurring in any given year). The City Capital Improvement Plan allocates \$900,000 for improvements to the storm drain system over the next five years, primarily to increase channel capacity.

#### Regulatory Setting

**Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA).** FEMA is responsible for identifying and mapping floodplains, and development in these floodplains is subject to the requirements set forth in the Federal Insurance Program.

**Regional Water Quality Control Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program.** The NPDES Program, Phase I and II, addresses drainage

in the context of water quality improvement. Under the program, specified jurisdictions and projects are required to adopt and implement Best Management Practices (BMPs), which may address drainage concerns.

The City of Pleasant Hill has complied with Phase I of the program by joining in a regional, cooperative agreement between cities and counties in the area called the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. Under the agreement, cities and counties maintain individual storm water management plans for five-year cycles. The current version of the plan is 1999-2003. The City is currently considering amendments to the existing agreement and plan to comply with new regulations regarding construction and BMP performance standards. General amendments must be made in 2003 by the end of the planning cycle. Intent to comply with new regulations must be documented by March 10, 2003.

#### Significance Thresholds

According to the CEQA Guidelines, the implementation of the Draft Plan would have a significant impact if it would:

- ? Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area
- ? Impede or redirect flood flows within a 100-year flood hazard area
- ? Expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury, or death from flooding
- ? Substantially alter existing drainage patterns, resulting in substantial increase in erosion or surface runoff and causing flooding
- ? Create or contribute to runoff that exceeds drainage system capacity
- ? Interfere with groundwater recharge

#### Impacts

**Impede Flows in, Place Structures in, or Increase Risk in the 100-year flood zone.** Continued development under the Draft Plan is likely to result in additional structures and residents within the 100-year flood zone, unless efforts at re-mapping and/or

construction of new flood control structures are successful at reducing or eliminating the flood zone in the city. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

Continued development within the 100-year flood zone may result in impediment or redirection of stormwater flows. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

##### **Safety and Noise Goal 1. Minimize potential for serious flooding and drainage problems.**

Safety and Noise Policy 1A. Maintain and upgrade the city drainage system.

Safety and Noise Policy 1B. Reduce flood damage potential in areas known to be prone to flooding.

Safety and Noise Policy 1C. Maintain and improve the ability of the Fire District and the Police, Maintenance and Engineering Departments to respond to flood emergencies.

*Safety and Noise Program 1.1. Continue to clear drainage systems regularly (inlets, culverts, swales, creeks, and channels), both public and private, to remove debris buildup that can exacerbate flooding impacts.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.2. Develop and adopt a City Master Drainage Plan.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.3. Install and maintain drainage system improvements as scheduled in the CIP.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.4. Use part of the former Oak Park Elementary School property or other sites south of Gregory Lane for flood detention.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.5. Enforce federal regulations that control placement of structures in floodplains, and maintain appropriate standards for development in flood-prone and poorly drained areas.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.6. Require mitigation for any development that could create or significantly worsen flood or drainage problems.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.7. Adopt a no-net-fill policy or limit on impervious surface as a percentage of lot size.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.8. Augment existing Geographic Information System and other data regarding low-lying areas with information obtained during storms.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.9. Develop a prioritized list of proposed capital improvement projects for low-lying, flood-prone areas, and seek funding for those projects.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.10. Adopt standards regulating expansion or new development in the 100-year floodplain.*

*Safety and Noise Program 1.11. Train Fire and Police personnel to a level appropriate to their positions and responsibilities to respond to flood emergencies.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional mitigation is required.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies contained in the Draft Plan.

**Alteration of Drainage Patterns.** Continued development in the city will alter drainage patterns on a parcel-by-parcel basis as lots are developed or redeveloped. This impact is considered construction-related and is discussed in Section 5.10, "Construction Impacts." The reader is referred to that section for analysis.

**Increase in Runoff/Decrease in Recharge.** Increased development accommodated by the Draft Plan will result in increased impermeable surfaces, which can increase the rate and velocity of runoff.

Continued development in the city, specifically conversion of undeveloped lots to developed uses or redevelopment of lots with increased coverage could increase the rate or amount of surface runoff such that off-site flooding may occur. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

Continued development in the City will increase the amount of runoff water conveyed to storm drains. Stormwater drainage facilities are included in public utilities and services provided for under the Growth Management Element, in compliance with Measure C. Proposed developed requires verification by the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City Public Works Department that adequate storm drainage facilities exist or are funded prior to project approval.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

[Issues associated with stormwater runoff, including volume and quality, are partly addressed through compliance with the NPDES program.]

*Community Development Program 21.2. Comply with directives from environmental regulatory authorities to update the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, standards and regulations to incorporate stormwater quality and watershed protection measures to limit impacts to aquatic ecosystems and preserve and restore the beneficial uses of natural water bodies in the city.*

#### **Growth Management Goal 2. Approve new development only after finding that the adopted performance standards are met.**

Growth Management Policy 2A. Require all new development to contribute to or participate in the improvement of park, school, fire, police, sanitary, water and flood control services in proportion to the demand generated by project occupants and users.

*Growth Management Program 2.1. Continue to implement a development*

*mitigation program to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with the provision of facilities for fire, police, park, sewage disposal, water, flood control, and school services.*

*Growth Management Program 2.2. Continue to approve development projects only after finding that one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- ? Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;*
- ? The characteristics of the development project require project-specific mitigation measures to maintain standards, and such measures will be required of the project sponsor;*
- ? Capital projects planned by the City or special district(s) will result in maintenance of standards.*

*Growth Management Program 2.3. Identify in the City's Capital Improvement Program those projects sponsored by the City and necessary to maintain levels of performance, along with phasing and funding sources to cover the cost of the projects.*

Refer also to policies cited previously for flood control.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are required.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs outlined in the Draft Plan.

**Consistency with Drainage Planning.** The City is required to comply with Phases I and II of NPDES, which addresses storm water quality. Continued development in the City will heighten issues associated with stormwater as sites are developed or redeveloped. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

*Community Development Program 21.2. Comply with directives from environmental regulatory authorities to update the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, standards and regulations to incorporate stormwater quality and watershed protection measures to limit impacts to aquatic ecosystems and preserve and restore the beneficial uses of natural water bodies in the city.*

### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional mitigation is required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Residual impacts associated with flooding and drainage are considered less than significant due to policies contained in the Draft Plan.

## **WATER QUALITY**

### **Issues**

The implementation of the Draft Plan will result in additional construction and development that may impact water quality. The Draft Plan also contains policies and programs that encourage the enhancement of creek channels in the area, which may have a beneficial impact on water quality.

### **Setting**

A May 1997 Watershed Sanitary Survey by the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) assessed the vulnerability of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to potential forms of contamination. Contamination can come from industrial and municipal wastewater discharges, urban runoff, highway runoff, agricultural runoff, pesticides (insecticides, herbicides, fungicides), grazing animals, concentrated animal facilities, wild animals, mine runoff, recreational activities, traffic accidents/spills (including cars, trucks, trains, ships and aircraft), seawater intrusion, geologic

hazards, and solid and hazardous waste disposal facilities.

### **Regulatory Setting**

**Clean Water Act (CWA).** Section 404 of the CWA prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States or adjacent wetlands without a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**Porter-Cologne.** The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1969 (Water Code §13000 et. seq.) established the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), divided the state into nine hydrographic basins, and established a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for each basin. The Porter-Cologne Act requires the SWRCB or RWQCB to adopt water quality control plans for protection of water quality. A water quality control plan must:

- ? Identify “beneficial uses” of water to be protected,
- ? Establish water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of the beneficial uses, and
- ? Establish a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives.

The SWRCB is the primary state agency responsible for formulating policies to protect the state’s surface waters and ground water supplies and approves water quality control plans prepared by each RWQCB. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has granted California primacy in administering and enforcing provisions of the CWA and the NPDES program. NPDES is the primary national program that regulates point source and non-point source discharges to surface waters. EPA has developed basin plans for its region that identify important regional water resources and beneficial uses and that provide for the prevention and abatement of waste pollution and nuisance. The plans also provide the basis for determining allowable waste discharges, taking enforcement actions, and evaluating



clean water grant proposals. Basin plans are reviewed about every three years. The planning area is within San Francisco Bay Area RWQCB Region 2 (SFRWQCB) jurisdiction.

### Significance Thresholds

According to the Guidelines, the implementation of the Draft Plan would have a significant impact if it would:

- ? Violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements
- ? Otherwise substantially degrade water quality

### Impacts

**Violation of Water Quality Standards.** Applicable water quality standards include the objectives set for area waterways by SFRWQCB and the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. Continued development in the City will increase the intensity of land use and may result in a reduction in surface water quality. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

*Community Development Program 21.2. Comply with directives from environmental regulatory authorities to update the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, standards and regulations to incorporate stormwater quality and watershed protection measures to limit impacts to aquatic ecosystems and preserve and restore the beneficial uses of natural water bodies in the city.*

### Mitigation Measures

None required.

### Residual Impact

Residual impacts are considered less than significant because of policies contained in the Draft Plan.

**Substantial Degradation of Water Quality.** The survey concluded that the natural

flushing of the Delta, controls at the contamination sources, and/or existing water treatment practice regularly mitigate these potential sources of contamination. After the completion of the Sanitary Survey, the Los Vaqueros Reservoir was completed and filled. This reservoir provides another means of mitigation because water can be drawn from it during dry periods when water cannot be taken directly from the Delta.

Regardless of mitigation provided by the Los Vaqueros Reservoir, development under the Draft Plan may adversely affect water quality. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

Refer to Community Development Program 2.1.2; impacts to water quality stemming from development are mitigated through compliance with existing regional permits.

### Mitigation Measures

None required.

### Residual Impacts and Conclusion

Impacts to hydrology and water quality are considered less than significant because of policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan.

## 5.2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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### RIPARIAN AND WETLAND COMMUNITIES

#### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan may indirectly affect riparian and wetland communities in the City.

#### Setting

The major waterways in the City are Grayson Creek and Contra Costa Canal. Both waterways are largely paved and channelized. However, both waterways provide some habitat in the channel bottoms, where sediment has collected and created opportunities for vegetation and animal species to become established. Grayson Creek may be considered “waters of the U.S.” and may be subject to regulation by the Army Corps of Engineers, and the California Department of Fish and Game.

The majority of the wetlands historically present in the City have been converted to urban use. Areas qualifying as wetlands are generally limited to streams channels, although evidence of seasonally wet areas exists in other portions of the City.

#### Regulatory Setting

**Clean Water Act of 1977 (CWA).** Regulatory protection for water resources throughout the United States is under the jurisdiction of the Army Corps of Engineers (ACE). Section 404 of the CWA prohibits the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States without formal consent from the ACE. Delineation of wetlands and other waters of the United States is required to determine acreage affected by dredge spoil or fill disposal. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) assess impacts to biological resources as part of the permit process. Policies relating to the loss of wetlands generally stress the need to compensate for

wetland acreage losses by creating wetlands from non-wetland habitat on at least an acre-for-acre basis.

**San Francisco Bay RWQCB Basin Plan.** The San Francisco Bay RWQCB Basin Plan provides management guidelines for maintaining water quality and associated beneficial uses of streams and rivers within the bay area region of California. General water quality objectives are set forth to facilitate the maintenance of optimum habitat for various aquatic species.

**California Department of Fish and Game Code, Chapter 6.** This code governs state-designated wetlands, including riparian and stream habitat, and mandates that mitigation be implemented to replace wetland extent and value lost to development. A Section 1603 Agreement is required for any alteration to a stream or lake, as well as to their associated riparian habitats, for purposes of development in California.

#### Significance Thresholds

The Guidelines consider impacts to biological resources significant if the implementation of the Draft Plan would:

- ? Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- ? Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

#### Impacts

**Federal or State Wetlands.** Federal and State wetlands in the City are generally confined to stream channels. The Draft Plan does not propose new urban uses in

these areas that may directly impact federal or state wetlands. However, wetlands may exist on parcels that are currently vacant, or on parcels which may be redeveloped at higher densities. Development of vacant and low-density parcels may therefore impact wetlands. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

*Community Development Program 22.1. Require mitigation for potential environmental impacts of development.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Amend riparian protection goals, policies and programs (goals and policies and programs under Community Development Goals 21 and 22) to include wetlands.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies contained in the Draft Plan and mitigation above.

**Riparian Areas.** Development under the Draft Plan may indirectly impact riparian areas by increasing risk of runoff and erosion. Runoff and erosion can both adversely affect water quality by increasing sediment loads and introducing harmful chemicals, and can lead to physical damage to or alteration of streambanks. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

**Community Development Goal 21. Preserve and reclaim streams and riparian areas to function as open space.**

Community Development Policy 21A. Require reclamation of degraded streams and riparian areas where possible in cooperation with the Flood Control District.

*Community Development Program 21.1. Establish guidelines for preserving and*

*reclaiming streams and riparian areas in conjunction with new or modified development.*

*Community Development Program 21.2 Comply with directives from environmental regulatory authorities to update the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, standards and regulations to incorporate stormwater quality and watershed protection measures to limit impacts to aquatic ecosystems and preserve and restore the beneficial uses of natural water bodies in the city.*

#### **Community Development Goal 22. Protect native species.**

Community Development Policy 22A. Minimize the impacts of development on plants and animals.

*Community Development Program 22.1. Require mitigation for potential environmental impacts of development.*

*Community Development Program 22.2. Require construction activities to avoid disturbance to natural features as much as possible.*

*Community Development Program 22.3. Continue to enforce the tree protection provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional mitigation is required.

#### **Conclusion**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to policies contained in the Draft Plan.

#### **SENSITIVE AND/OR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES**

#### **Issues**

Development proposed by the Draft Plan may impact habitat for sensitive plant and animal species.

#### **Setting**

Seventy-one parcels totaling 59.7 acres are currently vacant (2002), 1.5% of the total acreage in the City. The Draft Plan does not propose addition of acreage or parcels to the City or its SOI. Therefore, the vast majority of land in the City is currently developed, or surrounded by existing development. Due to its largely developed nature, the City of Pleasant Hill offers little habitat for sensitive plant or animal species.

The Contra Costa Water District prepared a GIS map of their interim service area in 2000, which identified areas of potential habitat for and documented occurrence of sensitive species. The map is available for viewing at the Pleasant Hill Community Development Department. The map was based on satellite imagery of the area, including Pleasant Hill.<sup>5</sup> The following vegetative communities were considered:

- ? Brackish Marsh/Mudflat
- ? Freshwater marsh
- ? Grassland
- ? Grassland Seasonal Wet
- ? Grassland Seasonal Wet Plowed
- ? Non-habitat
- ? Oak Woodland
- ? Open water
- ? Shrubland-Chaparral

The following species were considered:

- ? California Tiger Salamander
- ? California Red-legged frog
- ? California Clapper Rail
- ? California Black Rail
- ? California Least Tern
- ? Saltmarsh Harvest Mouse
- ? San Joaquin Kit fox
- ? Alameda Whipsnake
- ? Giant Garter snake
- ? Longhorn Fairy shrimp
- ? Lange's Metalmark butterfly
- ? Bay checkerspot butterfly
- ? Large-flowered fiddleneck
- ? Alkali milkvetch

<sup>5</sup> The map is limited by the data set; satellite imagery cannot pick up detail smaller than approximately 900 square feet. However, this level of detail is considered sufficient for a programmatic EIR.

- ? Soft Bird's-beak
- ? Mt. Diablo Bird's-beak
- ? Contra Costa Wallflower
- ? Contra Costa Goldfields
- ? Mason's Lilaeopsis
- ? Antioch Dunes Evening-primrose
- ? Rock Sanicle

Habitat documented in the City was limited to the Grayson Woods area, and consisted of the following:

- ? Grassland Seasonal Wet
- ? Grassland Seasonal Wet Plowed
- ? Oak Woodland
- ? Grassland

The areas of grassland seasonal wet and seasonal wet plowed areas correspond to the Grayson Woods Golf Course and portions of the surrounding neighborhood. The remainder of the City was mapped as "non-habitat."<sup>6</sup> Although some biological value may be retained in parks, vacant parcels, and landscaped yards, overall habitat is considered limited.

The Tiger Salamander was the only sensitive species documented in the planning area. The occurrence centers on the confluences of Grayson Creek and a number of smaller creeks in the northern portion of the City and into Pacheco. Creeks in the City have been altered for flood protection purposes.

## Regulatory Setting

**Section 7 or Section 10 of the United States Endangered Species Act.** The United States Endangered Species act provides legislation to protect federally listed plant and animal species. Impacts to listed species resulting from the implementation of a project would require the responsible agency to consult the Fish and Wildlife Service. Formal consultations must take place with the Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to section 10 of the Endangered Species Act, with the Fish

<sup>6</sup> "Habitat" is defined as an area providing cover, food, and water necessary to meet the biological requirements of one or more individuals of an animal species.

and Wildlife Service then making a determination as to the extent of impact to a particular species. If the Fish and Wildlife Service determines that impacts to a species would likely occur, alternatives and measures to avoid or reduce impacts must be identified. Section 7 also requires determination of environmental impacts, and thorough biological assessment. Section 7 applies to projects in which a federal agency may be involved, either through financial support or project leadership.

**State of California Endangered Species Act.** The State of California Endangered Species Act mandates that in instances where impacts to a state-listed endangered species would occur, the lead or responsible agency must contact the California Department of Fish and Game and enter into formal consultation. Impacts to the state-listed species would be evaluated and identification of mitigation measures would likely be required.

### Significance Thresholds

The Guidelines consider impacts to biological resources significant if the implementation of the Draft Plan would:

- ? Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### Impacts

**Sensitive species and habitat.** Development of vacant parcels may directly impact foraging areas for wildlife. Continued growth along riparian areas may indirectly impact the documented range of the California Tiger Salamander by increasing noise, light, and density of development. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

## Policies which Address Potential Impacts

### Community Development Goal 22. Protect native species.

Community Development Policy 22A. Minimize the impacts of development on plants and animals.

*Community Development Program 22.1. Require mitigation for potential environmental impacts of development.*

### Mitigation Measures

Add Program 22.2:

"In areas of documented occurrence of the California Tiger Salamander, require site-specific study and mitigation of potential impact. Mitigation may include avoidance of habitat, reduction of habitat disturbance, and offsite or onsite restoration or protection of similar habitat."

### Conclusion

The implementation of the Draft Plan will not result in substantial modification of habitat or have other substantial adverse effects on sensitive plants and animals. Impacts are considered less than significant due to policies included in the Draft Plan and policies added above.

## WILDLIFE MIGRATION CORRIDORS

### Issues

Continued development in the City under the Draft Plan may result in the development of currently vacant parcels, which may provide value as wildlife corridors. Implementation of the Draft Plan may also result in intensification of development along existing riparian corridors, dissuading species from utilizing corridors.

### Setting

Migration and movement corridors provide connection and cover for animal species as they nest, feed, or reproduce. Intact migration and movement corridors in the Pleasant Hill area are limited to relatively undeveloped areas in the foothills and creek channels.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Refer to Regulatory Setting under Sensitive Species, above. Migration corridors are indirectly protected by regulations governing impact to sensitive species, sensitive habitat, including riparian and wetland areas.

### **Significance Thresholds**

Impacts are considered significant if implementation of the Draft Plan would:

- ? Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

### **Impacts**

Continued development in the City under the Draft Plan may result in the development of currently vacant parcels, which may provide value as wildlife corridors, and may result in intensification of development along existing riparian corridors, dissuading species from utilizing corridors.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

Refer to policies listed under Sensitive Species and Riparian and Wetland Areas, above.

### **Mitigation Measures**

Amend goals and policies and programs under Community Development Goals 21 and 22, which address riparian protection, to include preservation of migration corridors.

### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies included in the Draft Plan and additional policy language identified above.

## 5.3 CULTURAL RESOURCES

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### ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

#### Issues

Searches of records housed at the Northwest Information Center identified a number of archaeological sites in the City. The City has therefore been identified as an area of high archaeological sensitivity. The implementation of the Draft Plan may adversely impact identified and unidentified archaeological resources.

#### Setting

*Regional.* The City of Pleasant Hill is part of the greater San Francisco Bay Area. The areas surrounding San Francisco Bay were some of the most densely populated by the indigenous populations of North America. The abundance of food, the wealth of trading opportunities and the temperate climate provided for a relatively bountiful lifestyle. As a result, tribal groups in the area tended to live in permanent settlements.

*Local.* The Bolbone and Chupacane cultures inhabited the Pleasant Hill area before settlers arrived from Mexico in the late 1700s. The Bolbone and Chupacane are two subgroups of the Costanoan group of California Natives. Settlers in 1846 reported Bolbone Indians living in Diablo Valley.<sup>7</sup> At the time of contact with settlers the natives in the area spoke Chochenyo, one of the Costanoan languages.

*History of Archeological Surveys.* A search of the Sacred Lands Inventory housed at the Native American Heritage Commission revealed no sacred lands in the City limits. It is important to note that this does not preclude the discovery or identification of sacred lands in the future. Sacred lands are those lands considered important to spiritual practice or history of identified Native American tribes.

A separate search for archaeological sites was conducted at the Northwest Information Center, one of a number of repositories of archaeological records in California. The records search at the Northwest Information Center included a review of all recorded archeological sites within or immediately adjacent to the area covered by the Draft Plan. In addition, the listings of the National Register of Historic Places, the California State Historic Resources Inventory, Contra Costa County Historic Resources Inventory, and California Historical Landmarks were reviewed.

Forty archeological reports, surveys and or record searches have been completed within the area covered by the Draft Plan. However, most of the area has not been subject to archeological survey. Archaeological sites recorded in the past have included human burials.

Six archeological sites are recorded within the Pleasant Hill General Plan area, with two additional sites located in close proximity. All but one of these sites was recorded over 40 years ago. The current condition of these sites is not known.

Two sites were identified close to, but outside of, the Pleasant Hill General Plan area.

#### Regulatory Setting

If a project may cause damage to a significant archaeological resource, the project may have a significant effect on the environment. Section 15064.5 of the Guidelines speaks to the determination of the significance of impacts to archaeological resources. CEQA requires that a mitigation plan be developed for impacts to significant resource(s). Avoidance and/or preservation in place are the preferred means of mitigating impacts.

Section 5097.90 of the Public Resources Code stipulates that it is contrary to the free expression and exercise of Native American religion to interfere with or cause severe

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.94517.com/chs/>

irreparable damage to any Native American cemetery, place of worship, religious or ceremonial site, or sacred shrine.

### **Significance Thresholds**

The Guidelines state that a project normally has a significant impact if it will:

- ? Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5
- ? Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries



## Impacts

**Direct Impacts.** The Northwest Information Center record search concluded that the Draft Plan area should be considered sensitive for both Native American and historic resources. Four of the six prehistoric sites recorded in the planning area were buried up to five feet deep by alluvium indicating there is a high likelihood that other buried cultural resources occur in the planning area, some of which may lie intact under currently developed areas. Projects under the Draft Plan may therefore have direct impacts on known archaeological resources. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

**Indirect Impacts.** Projects adjacent to known resources may indirectly impact such resources. Indirect impacts can occur in a number of ways, including destabilization of soil and increase in runoff. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

**Impacts to Previously Undiscovered Subterranean Resources, including Human Burials.** Archaeological resources may be discovered during construction of individual projects under the Draft Plan. Resources are most likely to be discovered during the excavation phase of site work. This conclusion is supported by evidence of similar means of resource discovery in the past, namely, at least one instance of burial discovery during excavation for a swimming pool in the 1940's. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

The Draft Plan contains the following policy language that addresses archaeological resources:

Community Development Policy 25A. Pursue methods to maintain historic structures and appropriately designate and protect additional historic and cultural resources that may exist in the city.

*Community Development Program 25.1. Maintain the historic and cultural resources*

*overlay districts for potential future application.*

*Community Development Program 25.2. Conduct a survey of the city to identify historic or cultural sites eligible for resource protection.*

*Community Development Program 25.4. Establish a commission that includes experts in local history and archaeology to manage the city's historic resources and/or add cultural resource management responsibility to the charge of the Architectural Review Commission.*

*Community Development Program 24.5. If cultural resources are unearthed during construction, earth-disturbing work shall be suspended until appropriate mitigation is established by the City in consultation with a qualified archaeologist retained by the developer and/or with the County Coroner.*

(Review for impact to archaeological resources is also a component of the standard project review process.)

### Mitigation Measures

The Northwest Information Center made three recommendations for mitigation of impacts to cultural resources:

- 1.) Archeologists should conduct archival and field study on a project-by-project basis in the planning area.*
- 2.) If cultural resources are encountered during a project all work in the vicinity of the find should be temporarily halted until an archeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find.*
- 3.) Identified cultural resources should be recorded on DPR 523 forms.*

Item 2 is addressed by Community Development Program 25.4 above; item 3 is standard procedure in the event of a discovery. The following program will be added to the Draft Plan to incorporate item 1:

"Archival study will be completed for all individual projects proposed to the City. Field study will also be required for those projects on previously undeveloped properties."

**Sacred lands.** Impacts to sacred lands are addressed through Community Development Policy 25A, above.

### **Conclusion**

Impacts to archaeological resources are considered significant, but mitigated.

## HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### Issues

A number of potentially historic structures may be impacted by implementation of the Draft Plan.

### Setting

In 1844, Irish immigrant William Welch became the only non-Mexican to obtain a land grant in the region. His Rancho Las Juntas contained more than 13,000 acres, including present-day Pleasant Hill. Early residents primarily cultivated grains such as wheat, hay and barley, which were shipped to market via Pacheco Creek. The Walnut Creek area, including Pleasant Hill, was first known as "The Corners," because of the convergence of the two roads leading from Pacheco and Lafayette (Realty World Website-History of Walnut Creek).<sup>8</sup>

The Patrick Rodgers Farm at 315 Cortsen Road is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>9</sup>

There are no California Historical Landmarks within the Pleasant Hill General Plan area.<sup>10</sup>

The Office of Historic Preservation's 2001 Historic Property Data File for Pleasant Hill lists 17 properties.

### Regulatory Setting

According to the Guidelines, a cultural resource shall generally be considered "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources [Public Resources Code §5024.1, Title CCR, §4852] including the following:

- (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage

- (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past

- (C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values, or

- (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to §5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (pursuant to §5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource (as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(j) or 5024.1). In practice, structures more than 50 years old are considered potentially historic and merit further examination. The Northwest Information Center, when consulted regarding resources in the planning area, suggested that structures 45 years and older may be considered historic.

Applicable laws and regulations for historical properties are outlined in the Guidelines and Public Resources Code §21084.1 and 21083.2.

### Significance Thresholds

A project would normally have a significant impact on a historical resource if it would:

- ? Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources as defined in §15064.5

A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.realtyworldcal.com>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.nr.nps.gov>

<sup>10</sup> [http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=21415](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=21415)

historical resource would be materially impaired.

### **Impacts**

Sources of impact to historic structures can include direct disturbance, and indirect disturbance, which includes alteration of historical context. The Draft Plan may impact such resources; therefore, impacts are considered potentially significant.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

#### **Community Development Goal 25. Preserve historic sites and structures.**

Community Development Policy 25A. Pursue methods to maintain historic structures and appropriately designate and protect additional historic and cultural resources that may exist in the city.

*Community Development Program 25.1. Maintain the historic and cultural resources overlay districts for potential future application.*

*Community Development Program 25.2. Conduct a survey of the city to identify historic or cultural sites eligible for resource protection.*

*Community Development Program 25.3. Apply for the Certified Local Government designation necessary to receive technical assistance and grant funding from the National Park Service.*

*Community Development Program 25.4. Establish a commission that includes experts in local history and archaeology to manage the city's historic resources and/or add cultural resource management responsibility to the charge of the Architectural Review Commission.*

### **Mitigation Measures**

The Northwest Information Center had the following recommendations for mitigation of impacts to historical resources:

*Buildings over 45 years old should be evaluated on a project-by-project basis to determine if they have historical value at a local, state and/or federal level.*

Amend Community Development Program 25.2 go include:

*"...with specific consideration of structures 45 years and older."*

### **Residual Impacts**

Although the Draft Plan area is considered highly sensitive for archaeological and historical resources, impacts are considered mitigated to a less than significant level.

## 5.4 AGRICULTURE

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### Issues

The implementation of the Draft Plan may result in the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural use.

### Setting

Important farmland is monitored by the State Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection (DLRP). The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, operated under the DLRP, includes two levels of agricultural suitability that apply to Pleasant Hill.

*Prime Farmland* is land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. This land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

*Farmland of Statewide Importance* is land with a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural production, having only minor shortcomings, such as less ability to store soil moisture, compared to prime farmland. This land must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

At least one property within the City exhibits prime agricultural characteristics and constitutes farmland of statewide importance: the Mangini property. No other farmland, such as unique farmland, farmland of local importance, or grazing land, is mapped in the planning area.

### Regulatory Setting

There are no state or federal laws governing the conversion of prime and important farmland; rather, jurisdictions devise policies and programs pertaining to such properties. The California Land Conservation Act (LCA)

or Williamson Act contract program provides means to conserve important farmlands in the state. Under the provisions of the Act, landowners may voluntarily enter into a long-term contract with cities or counties to form agricultural preserves and maintain their property in agriculture or open space in exchange for property tax reductions. No Williamson Act properties are located in the planning area.

### Significance Thresholds

According to the CEQA Guidelines, impacts are considered significant if the implementation of the Plan would impact prime or otherwise important farmland as mapped by the DLRP on the most recent Important Farmland Map (1998), or if the Draft Plan would conflict with a current Williamson Act contract. Impacts are considered significant unless it is determined that the property lacks agricultural capability, or its conversion would not adversely impact the agricultural industry in an area.

### Impacts

The Draft Plan will result in a continuation of single-family residential designation on the 25-acre Mangini property. This property contains approximately 12.5 acres of prime farmland and 12.5 acres of farmland of statewide importance.<sup>11</sup> The site is used for the cultivation of seasonal produce (pumpkins, corn, etc.) and the sale of agricultural products from other portions of the County.

Minimum parcel sizes are usually established for each type of agricultural land. Minimum parcels sizes are generally based on the size required to make a viable living from the property. Due to the small size of the property, CMCA contacted the Agricultural Commissioner's Office for assistance in determining the significance of the parcel in terms of agricultural value. The

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<sup>11</sup> Estimates from visual review of most recent Important Farmland Map.

Commissioner's Office cited a number of items for consideration:

- ? The site is currently viable for agricultural use because the current owner has landholdings in other portions of the County that can subsidize the smaller operation.
- ? The acreage of prime farmland on this site is below generally accepted minimum parcel sizes (20 acres).
- ? The site is effectively an "island" in an otherwise urban setting; conversion of the property will not lead to conversion of other agricultural land in the County.

Due to the above considerations, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office determined that potential conversion of this site to urban use would not constitute a significant impact.<sup>12</sup>

In addition, consultation of the 2000 inventory data at [www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp](http://www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp) yielded the following information:

- ? Prime farmland on the site totals 0.03% of the County total, and
- ? Farmland of Statewide Importance on the site totals 0.1% of the County total.

The site therefore is a small fraction of the total acreage in the County; indeed, the Agricultural Commissioner's office is focusing conservation efforts on the eastern portions of the County where the majority of agricultural land remains.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

The Draft Plan supports continued residential zoning of the Mangini property.

### **Mitigation**

None required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant.

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<sup>12</sup> Larry Yost, pers. comm.

## 5.5 CIRCULATION

### ROADWAY & INTERSECTION OPERATION

#### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan may have adverse impacts to roadways and intersections in Pleasant Hill.



Figure 3. Roadways in Pleasant Hill

#### Background

#### Measure C - Regulation of Traffic Improvements and Standards

Traffic in the Pleasant Hill area is largely associated with regional highways,

freeways, and other large-scale roadways. Commuter traffic makes up a significant portion of local traffic issues. In part in recognition of the regional nature of traffic concerns, citizens passed Measure C in 1988, which required the inclusion of a growth management element in a City's General Plan. Incentives for inclusion of such an element were tied to funding for traffic improvements.

The Growth Management Element is required to provide standards for Levels of Service (LOS), establish monitoring locations, provide annual reporting of monitoring results, and plan for improvements needed to maintain levels of service set by the Element. Improvements are funded mainly through fees charged to developers, relative to the impact their particular project will have on traffic levels. This continuous monitoring, planning, and improvement schedule provides a mechanism to mitigate circulation impacts concurrently or in advance of new development.

Traffic is addressed on a regional scale through Measure C. Consistency with the Growth Management Element, required by Measures C helps ensure that cumulative impacts are adequately addressed.

#### Setting

Streets are divided into classifications that reflect size, traffic volume, and traveler behavior. In Pleasant Hill, roadways are generally classified as collectors, which connect neighborhoods and provide access to larger roadways, and arterials, which carry traffic across the city and connect to the freeway system. Major roadways include:

**Collectors** - Boyd Road, Cleaveland Road, Geary Road, Gregory Lane, and Morello Avenue.

**Arterials** – Contra Costa Boulevard, Chilpancingo Parkway, Monument Boulevard, Oak Park Boulevard, Pleasant Hill Road/Alhambra Avenue, and Taylor Boulevard.

Regional Highways in the vicinity include State Route 4, the major east-west link across the County, and SR 24, a four-to-six-lane freeway connecting Pleasant Hill to Oakland and the Bay Bridge. Commercial vehicles with gross weight over 6000 pounds have limited access to city surface streets.

**Level of Service (LOS)** describes the relative ease or congestion of traffic movement with ratings from A to F. *Table 8* summarizes existing LOS for ten key intersections in the city, based on traffic counts collected in January and February 2001 and on methodology adopted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA). In urban areas, intersection levels of service are the best indicators of overall traffic levels.

All of the studied intersections currently operate at acceptable levels (LOS D or better).

<b>Table 8. Existing Levels of Service (LOS) for Intersections</b>				
<b>Intersection (listed north-to-south)</b>	<b>Existing Conditions</b>			
	<b>A.M. Peak Hour</b>		<b>P.M. Peak Hour</b>	
	<b>V/C</b>	<b>LOS</b>	<b>V/C</b>	<b>LOS</b>
Contra Costa Blvd./I-680 Ramps	N/A	N/A	0.81	D
Contra Costa Blvd/Chilpancingo Pkwy	0.62	B	0.83	D
Contra Costa Blvd/Taylor Blvd	0.45	A	0.74	C
Contra Costa Blvd/Gregory Lane	N/A	N/A	0.52	A
Contra Costa Blvd/Monument Blvd	N/A	N/A	0.64	B
Monument Blvd / Buskirk Ave/ Ramona Drive/Lisa Lane	0.57	A	0.71	C
Gregory Lane/Cleaveland Road	0.45	A	0.48	A
Gregory Lane/Pleasant Hill Road	0.63	B	0.59	A
Oak Park Blvd / Putnam Blvd/ Patterson Blvd	0.69	B	0.64	B
Oak Park Rd./ Coggins Dr / Buskirk Ave/ Oak Rd	0.49	A	0.48	A
N/A = Not analyzed because p.m. peak hour is noticeably busier than a.m. peak hour.				

## Significance Thresholds

Impacts are considered significant if implementation of the Draft Plan would result in an inconsistency with the Growth Management Element, which sets an acceptable level of service of D for intersections.

## Impacts

Continued growth in the City of Pleasant Hill will increase traffic volumes, which could result in decreased levels of service for area roadways and intersections.

The CCTA prepared its first major update to the Contra Costa Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) in 2000. The CTP is required by the Measure C Growth Management Program, which requires the CCTA to:

Support efforts to develop and maintain an ongoing planning process with the cities and the county through the funding and development of a Comprehensive Transportation Plan.<sup>13</sup>

The CTP is the central planning document for the county and its incorporated cities. It incorporates Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance, traffic service objectives, while identifying specific projects for service improvement.

The CTP included year 2000 and 2020 traffic projections for the City of Pleasant Hill based on the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) population projections (refer to Appendix B). The maps provided traffic counts, current and projected, for roadway segments in each direction. By adding each direction of a segment and multiplying by ten, a reasonable estimate of average daily trips (ADT) for a

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ccta.net/GM/html/cctp-main.htm>



segment can be obtained.<sup>14</sup> The projections identified potential increases in ADT of 50 to 90 percent in some locations (Chilpancingo Parkway from Morello to Contra Costa Boulevard and Contra Costa Boulevard from Gregory Lane to Chilpancingo Parkway, respectively), with smaller increases on minor roads. As noted in Section 5.7, Air Quality, the ABAG projections for the City are greater than the population growth proposed in the Draft Plan. Therefore, the CTP more than adequately addresses growth in Pleasant Hill in its planning framework. Moreover, the Draft Plan contains the mandated Growth Management Element, which addresses traffic and requires compliance with the CTP.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

**Growth Management Goal 1. Continue allocating land uses in a manner that sustains acceptable circulation levels of service.**

Growth Management Policy 1A. Designate Routes of Regional Significance in cooperation with the Transportation Authority and TRANSPAC.

*Growth Management Program 1.1. Continue to work with the Transportation Authority and TRANSPAC to develop Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance.*

*Growth Management Program 1.2. For all Basic Routes, continue to apply the standards for signalized intersections adopted by the City and the Transportation Authority, unless the City and the Transportation Authority make findings of special circumstances.*

*Growth Management Program 1.3. Conduct traffic impact studies consistent with the Technical Guidelines published by the Transportation Authority as part of the application review process for development projects estimated to generate more than 100 peak-hour vehicle trips.*

*Growth Management Program 1.4. Only approve projects expected to generate more than 100 peak-hour trips in the peak direction when the City or RDA has made Findings of Consistency with the adopted LOS standards.*

*Growth Management Program 1.5. Continue to require developers to pay costs necessary to mitigate impacts of their projects on the local and regional transportation system, including establishment of trails and other alternatives to vehicle use.*

*Growth Management Program 1.6. Bi-annually monitor compliance with adopted standards for the Reporting Intersections, and submit a checklist on compliance with the Growth Management Program to the Transportation Authority.*

*Growth Management Program 1.7. Amend the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Capital Improvement Program or other relevant City plans and policies as necessary to attain the LOS standards for Basic Route signalized intersections.*

*Growth Management Program 1.8. Participate in multi-jurisdictional transportation planning through TRANSPAC activities, including planning for intersections subject to Findings of Special Circumstances located in other jurisdictions when it is believed that the City's actions contribute to conditions at such intersections.*

*Growth Management Program 1.9. Participate in the Transportation Authority's conflict resolution process as needed to resolve disputes related to preparation and implementation of Action Plans and other programs described in this Element.*

*Growth Management Program 1.10. Following adoption of Regional Route Action Plans by TRANSPAC and the Transportation Authority, implement specified City actions in a timely manner.*

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<sup>14</sup> Martin Engelmann, pers. comm.

## Mitigation Measures

No additional measures are required.

## Conclusion

Impacts to traffic volumes are effectively mitigated by the growth management element and existing regional traffic planning programs. Impacts are less than significant.

## CONSISTENCY WITH TRAFFIC PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### Issues

The Draft Plan should be consistent with other transportation planning documents applicable to the planning area.

### Setting

Due to the regional nature of transportation concerns in the Bay Area, a number of documents exist which guide improvements and planning on the local level. These documents are promulgated by one of two agencies: the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, which governs implementation of Measure C, and is the acting Congestion Management Authority for Pleasant Hill, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which provides planning and regulation of transportation systems within the nine-county Bay Area.

### Growth Management Program

(Consistency with the Growth Management Program is discussed in the previous section.)

### Contra Costa Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)

The only specific reference to Pleasant Hill in the CTP is in the list of projects to be included in the Congestion Management Plan (see below). Projects listed include improvements to arterials, bicycle

opportunities, pedestrian systems, transit, and operations.<sup>15</sup>

*Draft Plan Response:* The Draft Plan complies with Measure C by including a Growth Management Element, establishing performance standards, and providing for monitoring of intersections. Arterials are addressed through this monitoring system, and policies and programs identified previously in this section. Improvements to bicycle, pedestrian and transit opportunities are addressed under alternative transportation, below.

### Contra Costa Transportation Authority Bike and Pedestrian Plan

The CCTA is currently working on a draft Bike and Pedestrian Plan that was not available at the time of this writing.

*Draft Plan Response:* The Draft Plan contains policies and programs supporting cooperation with regional planning efforts and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian opportunities. (Refer to policies and programs under Circulation Goal 4, listed under the Alternative Transportation section of this chapter.)

### Congestion Management Plan (CMP)

Consistency with the Congestion Management Plan is determined through completion of a checklist on an annual basis. The checklist contains the following general questions:

- ? Has the city participated in regional transportation planning committees?
- ? Has the city identified or contributed to a deficiency on the CMP system in its locality or in others?
- ? If so, has the city prepared, adopted and implemented a deficiency plan?
- ? Has the city participated in Action Plan process?
- ? Has the cities traffic impact studies been conducted for all development projects

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<sup>15</sup> Steve Kersevan, pers. comm.

estimated to generate more than 100 peak-hour trips?

- ? Has the cost of mitigating traffic impacts been estimated?

*Draft Plan Response:* The Draft Plan contains policies and programs (Goal 1 et seq. of the Circulation Element) which address compliance with the specific questions posed above.

#### Regional Transportation Plan (2000)

The current Regional Transportation Plan identifies a number of improvements, goals and strategies for the Bay Area. The RTP contains the following improvements that may impact traffic and traffic flow in the Pleasant Hill area:

- ? I-680/Route 4 interchange freeway to freeway connections
- ? I-680 HOV lanes from Marina Vista to North Main Street (southbound) and from Route 242 northbound to Marina Vista
- ? Widen Alhambra Avenue from Route 4 to Mc Alvey Drive
- ? Widen Pacheco Boulevard from two to four lanes from Blum Road to Arthur Road
- ? Widen Geary Road

*Draft Plan Response:* The Draft Plan contains specific policies and programs identified under Goal 1 of the Circulation Element that ensure cooperation in regional planning efforts and improvements such as those listed above.

#### **Conclusion**

The Draft Plan contains policies and programs that support cooperation with regional transportation agencies in planning and implementing traffic improvements. The Draft Plan is considered consistent with regional traffic planning documents.

#### **TRAFFIC SAFETY**

##### **Issues**

Implementation of the Draft Plan may reduce traffic safety by increasing traffic in areas that currently experience high accident frequencies. Implementation of the Draft Plan may also affect intersection configurations by allowing development of currently vacant parcels and redevelopment of underutilized parcels requiring new or additional access points.

##### **Setting**

Due to high volumes, complex configurations and freeway access, the intersections with the highest accident frequency are:

- ✍ Contra Costa Boulevard/ Chilpancingo Parkway
- ✍ Contra Costa Boulevard/I-680 Southbound Onramp
- ✍ Monument Boulevard/Buskirk Avenue/Ramona Drive/Lisa Lane
- ✍ Contra Costa Boulevard/Gregory Lane

##### **Significance Thresholds**

The CEQA Guidelines state that a project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will

- ? Substantially increase hazards
- ? Result in inadequate emergency access

##### **Impacts**

**Traffic Hazards and Emergency Access.** The Draft Plan includes development of currently vacant land and redevelopment of other utilized land. Increased density in these areas may exacerbate existing traffic safety issues by increasing traffic volume and/or including inappropriate design configurations.

##### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

**Circulation Goal 1. Establish and maintain a safe and efficient circulation system that emphasizes the use of existing arterial and collector roadways, paths, and bike lanes.**

Circulation Policy 1A. Maintain rights-of-way at current widths, except as necessary to relieve specific areas of congestion.

*Circulation Program 1.1. Identify specific roadway segments where right-of-way widening, narrowing, or extension may be appropriate or will likely be needed to improve safety.*

*Circulation Program 1.2. Continue to provide a forum such as the Traffic Safety Committee for citizen input on traffic-related issues.*

*Circulation Program 1.3. Continue to evaluate intersections with the highest accident rates.*

**Circulation Goal 3. Reduce speeding, especially in neighborhoods.**

Circulation Policy 3A. Focus traffic control efforts in residential areas that experience excessive traffic or speeding.

*Circulation Program 3.1. Continue to implement adopted criteria/policies regarding the installation of traffic-calming measures.*

*Circulation Program 3.2. Undertake traffic-calming measures in identified locations, including around schools as needed.*

*Circulation Program 3.3. Sponsor forums to obtain citizen input regarding the appropriateness of road improvements intended to reduce speeding.*

**Circulation Goal 5. Ensure that streets are safe and pedestrian-friendly.**

Circulation Policy 5A. Install or upgrade sidewalks, warning devices, crosswalks, and other pedestrian aids where appropriate.

*Circulation Program 5.2. Identify ways that education and police enforcement can improve pedestrian safety.*

Traffic safety is also addressed in Section 35-16.22 of the Municipal Code, "Sight Obstructions at Intersections and Driveways."

**Mitigation Measures**

No additional mitigation measures are required.

**Residual Impacts**

Impacts associated with traffic safety are considered mitigated by policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan.

**ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**

**Issues**

Implementation of the Draft Plan may result in population growth that will affect operation of alternative transportation services.

**Setting**

Bike routes are designated along most major and local streets, and trails line the Contra Costa Canal. The bicycle network links the city and the regional bike network for both work and recreation-related trips. County Connection (CC) and Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCTA) currently serve Pleasant Hill, and provide bus service in the city and to adjacent areas.

Public bus lines cover most major streets and link to the Martinez AMTRAK station and the Pleasant Hill BART station for regional commuting. BART provides a significant alternative to the automobile for work-related trips from Pleasant Hill to the East Bay and San Francisco. BART is expanding its service to South San Francisco and the San Francisco International Airport.

**Impacts**

Implementation of the Draft Plan may result in over 3,000 additional people in the city limits and SOI. The addition of more than 3,000 people may impact service levels of bus lines, BART and bikeways.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

#### **Circulation Goal 4. Reduce congestion and vehicle trips through non-automobile transportation.**

Circulation Policy 4A. Maintain and upgrade the City's bikeway and pedestrian system.

*Circulation Policy 4B. Encourage use of bus and rail service for local and regional travel.*

*Circulation Program 4.1. Identify areas where bikeway connections can be added and/or made safer.*

*Circulation Program 4.2. Install additional bike lanes, routes, trails and connections where feasible.*

*Circulation Program 4.3. Work with County Connection to ensure that local bus and shuttle service meets community needs.*

*Circulation Program 4.4. Explore incentives for the public to not commute by automobile.*

*Circulation Program 4.5. Expand use of transit for seniors, students, and persons with disabilities.*

*Circulation Program 4.6. Work with employers, schools, and developers to encourage ridesharing and transit use.*

*Circulation Program 4.7. Work with employers, schools, and developers to encourage innovative transportation measures.*

### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan.

### **PARKING**

#### **Issues**

Implementation of the Draft Plan may result in increased demand for parking.

#### **Setting**

Parking in the City can be broken into categories:

- ? Residential parking – over 64% of the City is residential; parking is provided on and off-street.
- ? Commercial parking – Shoppers and others doing business in town
- ? DVC – Students and others doing business on campus

According to the City, parking in the downtown area is the main issue of concern.<sup>16</sup> Provision of parking is regulated by Section 35-17 of the Municipal Code, which requires provision of adequate parking with development projects or certain other improvements.

#### **Significance Thresholds**

CEQA Guidelines consider impacts significant if implementation of the Draft Plan would result in inadequate parking capacity.

#### **Impacts**

At the General Plan level, assessment of whether or not parking will be sufficient is difficult at best. Growth proposed under the Draft Plan will likely exacerbate location-specific parking issues. However, the City required application of adopted parking standards to all new development projects as dictated under the Zoning Ordinance.

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<sup>16</sup> Steve Kersevan, pers. comm.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

None. City parking standards are applied during the permit process pursuant to Section 35-17 of the Municipal Code.

### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional mitigation is required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant.

### **Conclusion**

Impacts associated with circulation are considered less than significant because of policies contained in the Draft Plan.

## 5.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

#### Issues

Development proposed under the Draft Plan may increase risk of exposure to hazardous materials.

#### Setting

*Hazardous materials* include industrial wastes, pesticides, herbicides, infectious waste, radioactive materials and combustible fuels. Transport and storage of hazardous materials pose potential public safety hazards in Pleasant Hill. Vehicle accidents involving hazardous materials have occurred on I-680, and no regulations prevent trucks from carrying hazardous materials through the city (although trucks transporting hazardous materials are regulated by the County and State).

Two fuel pipelines traverse the city: one beneath Taylor Boulevard and another beneath the Iron Horse Trail at the eastern edge of the city. Both pipelines are equipped with pressure-sensitive valves that automatically shut off flow in the event of a break in the line.

The County has a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan that identifies the role of local agencies in responding to hazardous materials incidents. The County retains primary responsibility for response to incidents, and maintenance of adequate staffing and equipment throughout the region. The City has an agreement with the County to respond to events within the city limits.<sup>17</sup>

Hazardous materials storage in Pleasant Hill is limited to fuels in underground tanks at

service stations and chemicals at light industrial sites.

#### Regulatory Setting

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 2185, each business storing hazardous materials must obtain permits from the City and the Fire District, and must file with the County Environmental Health Department a plan that establishes incident prevention measures, handling protocols, and evacuation procedures. The proposed plans also are reviewed by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and are enforced by the Fire District.

In accordance with Assembly Bill 2948, the City has adopted the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, which establishes siting criteria for toxic waste treatment, storage and disposal facilities that require environmental review. The Zoning Ordinance calls for review of such facilities to consider options to incineration and include enforceable mitigation measures.

#### Significance Thresholds

According to the Guidelines, impacts are generally considered significant if the project would:

- ? Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials
- ? Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment
- ? Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school

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<sup>17</sup> Louie Gonzalez, City Public Affairs Officer, pers. comm.

- ? Be located on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment

## Impacts

**Hazards associated with routine transport of hazardous materials, hazardous materials emissions and risk of accidental release.** Trucks containing hazardous materials traveling through the city are not regulated by ordinance, but are regulated by the County and State. Continued development in the City will expose additional persons, including sensitive receptors such as schoolchildren, to the risk of hazardous materials release. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

**Hazardous materials sites.** A records search was completed which yielded no listed hazardous materials sites, as defined by Government Code Section 65962.5, in the City of Pleasant Hill. Impacts are less than significant (CalSites and/or Cortese lists).

## Policies which Address Potential Impacts

*Safety and Noise Element Program 5.1: Identify and require businesses that use, store, dispose of, or transport hazardous materials to ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect public health and safety.*

*Safety and Noise Element Program 5.2: Work with appropriate agencies to require all transport of hazardous materials to follow approved routes.*

Hazardous materials are also addressed in the Municipal Code (Section 35-16.14(C)) as follows:

**"Hazardous and Extremely Hazardous Materials.** The use, handling, storage and transportation of hazardous and extremely hazardous materials shall comply with the provisions of the California Hazardous

Materials regulations and any other applicable laws."

## Mitigation Measures

No additional mitigation is required.

## Residual Impacts

Impacts are considered mitigated by policies contained in the Draft Plan.

## AIRPORT OPERATIONS

### Issues

Land uses developed under the Draft Plan may expose additional persons to hazards associated with operations at the Buchanan Field airport.

### Setting

Constructed during World War II, Buchanan Field has been operating since 1946 as a public-use airport on unincorporated land under County control. As late as the mid-1990s, regularly scheduled commercial flights serviced destinations in southern California.

Total airport operations in 1999 consisted of 232,939 flights, compared to a high of 353,926 in 1978. The 592 aircraft based at Buchanan Field as of October 2000 included 17 jets, 28 helicopters, 46 multi-engine, and 501 single-engine planes. Airport operations are governed by a 1990 County master plan.

According to the 2000 Contra Costa County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, State law identifies local general plans as the primary mechanism for implementing airport compatibility policies. Pursuant to the Plan, a City's General Plan must be deemed consistent with the Airport Land Use Plan. The Airport Land Use Plan designates safety zones around the airport. In general, regulation of land use decreases with distance from the airline flight path.



On a project-by-project basis, the County Airport Land Use Commission reviews planning, zoning and building regulations within the "airport influence" area for consistency with the Airport Land Use Plan, and may review specific development proposals in that area in Pleasant Hill if the City agrees. The airport influence area extends about 2.5 miles from the runways, encompassing most of Pleasant Hill north of Boyd Road.

### Significance Thresholds

The CEQA Guidelines state and impact is normally significant if the project would:

- ? Result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area due to a nearby airport or overlying airport land use planning area

### Impacts

**Consistency with the Airport Land Use Plan.** The airport land use planning area adopted for Buchanan Field airport includes most of the northern portion of Pleasant Hill. Continued development within the airport influence area depicted in the airport land use plan may expose additional persons to safety hazards. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

**Safety and Noise Goal 2. Ensure that airport operations do not adversely affect quality of life and safety.**

Safety and Noise Policy 2A. Adhere to County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan development restrictions.

*Safety and Noise Program 2.1. Encourage the Airport Land Use Commission to consider the concerns of Pleasant Hill residents in its decision-making process.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.5. Monitor the proceedings and actions of the Airport Land Use Commission, the County, and the Federal Aviation Administration with respect*

*to operations at Buchanan Field, and inform Pleasant Hill residents of opportunities to participate in relevant public meetings and provide timely comments to these agencies.*

### Mitigation Measures

No additional measures are required.

### Residual Impacts

Impacts are less than significant.

## 5.7 AIR QUALITY

### Issues

Air pollution is a health hazard and may adversely affect the productivity of important food and fiber crops. For this reason, federal and state standards have been enacted to protect the public from the adverse effects of such pollutants. Currently, Contra Costa County does not meet (or is a "non-attainment" area for) state and national standards for ozone and respirable particulate matter (PM10). Continued development under the Draft Plan may hinder efforts to achieve and maintain state and federal air quality standards.

### Setting

Environmental factors that affect air quality in Pleasant Hill include:

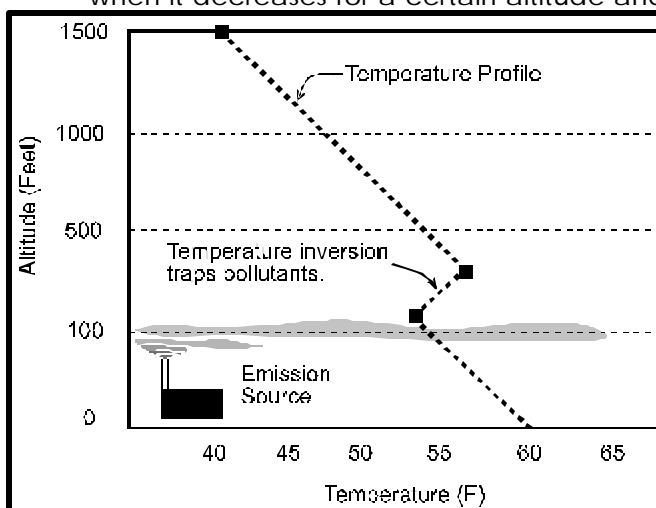
**I. The type, quantity and location of pollutant emissions.** According to the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), the primary emissions sources affecting the area are motor vehicles and woodburning fireplaces. The area is also subject to pollutants dispersed in other portions of the Bay Area, which can be trapped by the topography of the Diablo Valley.

**II. The physical setting.** The City of Pleasant Hill is located in the Diablo and San Ramon Valley climatological subregion. The Diablo Valley is characterized by mountains on the west, the Carquinez Strait to the north and San Ramon Valley to the south. The west side mountains provide significant blockage to the marine air flow, often resulting in build up of pollutants, especially in the summer months. The wind flow in the Valley can lead to the buildup of surface inversions that can concentrate pollutants (see IV).

### III. The weather and climate of the area.

The Diablo Valley is characterized by relatively low wind speeds, except in areas near mountain gaps where wind speeds increase. The mountains along the west side of the City reduce the moderating effect of the ocean; therefore, average summer and winter temperatures are higher and lower, respectively, than coastal portions of the Bay Area. Mean summer maximum temperatures range from the low- to mid-80's while mean winter minimums range from the high 30's to low 40's.<sup>18</sup>

**IV. Temperature Inversions.** Normally, air temperature decreases with altitude in the atmosphere. The temperature is "inverted" when it decreases for a certain altitude and



then increases for a short distance before decreasing again. The resultant warm air mass acts as a barrier to vertical circulation, confining pollutants and increasing their local concentration. When inversions occur at altitudes lower than surrounding topographic features, such as the surrounding hills, the combination of physical barriers and atmospheric stability may result in higher pollutant concentrations.

### Regulatory Setting

The federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act establish thresholds for the maximum acceptable concentrations of

<sup>18</sup> BAAQMD. *CEQA Guidelines*. (San Francisco, Ca. 1999). p. D-11

selected pollutants (so-called "criteria pollutants"). In most cases, the State standards are stricter than their federal counterparts are. The criteria pollutants of most concern in the air basin are ozone, its precursors, and PM10.

**Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>).** Ozone is a type of oxygen formed in the atmosphere by complex photochemical reactions involving precursor pollutants and sunlight. Precursors include reactive organic gases (ROG), also known as reactive hydrocarbons (RHC), and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>). NO<sub>x</sub> emissions result from the combustion of fuels, including the so-called "fossil fuels" (oil, natural gas, coal, etc.). Sources of ROG emissions include the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels and the evaporation of petroleum products.

The amount of ozone formed depends on the concentration of these chemical precursors and the intensity and duration of sunlight. Consequently, ambient ozone concentrations tend to vary with the seasonal fluctuations in sunlight (higher in summertime, lower in winter).

**Respirable Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>).** Respirable particulate matter (particles 10 microns or smaller in diameter) is also a pollutant of concern. The BAAQMD notes that major anthropogenic sources of PM10 include motor vehicles, construction activity, and woodburning.<sup>19</sup> PM10 is a pollutant of concern because of its detrimental effect on the respiratory system; fine particulate matter can bypass natural filtration mechanisms in the body and can lodge in the lungs, causing respiratory distress.

Ambient air quality is not monitored in the City of Pleasant Hill. The nearest monitoring station is located in Concord, on Treat Boulevard. The station monitors ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter. Violations of the state and national standards measured at the Concord station for PM10 and ozone are summarized in *Table 9*.

<sup>19</sup> BAAQMD, p. B-2

Table 9. Number of Days of Violation of State and National Monitoring Station (1992-2001)							
Pollutant	Standard	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
PM10	State	8	2	4	1	1	2
PM10	National	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ozone	State (1-hour)	3	7	4	9	11	2
Ozone	National (1-hour)	0	2	0	3	1	0

### Significance Thresholds

The BAAQMD has established guidelines to determine the significance of impacts associated with specific development proposals. The characteristics of a project (size, land use, vehicle trips generated, etc.) are input to a computer program to determine the emissions that would be generated. Specific measures can then be imposed to reduce emissions levels.

Owing to the lack of detail in a General Plan compared to individual development projects, the BAAQMD recommends comparison of the plan with the adopted Clean Air Plan (CAP) in lieu of computer modeling. The BAAQMD recommends that the consistency analysis address whether:

- ? The local plan is consistent with CAP population and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) assumptions, specifically, whether
  - o Population growth for the jurisdiction will exceed the values included in the current CAP, and whether
  - o The rate of increase in VMT for the jurisdiction is equal to or lower than the rate of increase in population
- ? The local plan is consistent with Clean Air Plan transportation control measures and such measures are indeed being implemented
- ? Buffer zones are established to avoid odors and toxics

If the answer to all of the above is yes, then the plan is determined consistent with the CAP. If the answer to any of the above is no, then the plan is considered inhibitive to

the implementation of the CAP and is considered inconsistent. Inconsistency with the CAP is considered a significant impact.

## Impacts

? Is the local plan consistent with CAP population and VMT assumptions, including:

- o Population growth rates, and
- o The rate of increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (must be equal to or lower than the rate of increase in population)

**Population Growth Rates.** The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) prepares population projections for Bay Area communities. The BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines suggest using the projections for one year prior to the most recent CAP. The 2000 CAP is the most recent; 1999 ABAG projections are therefore used for comparison (*Table 10*). Figures in *Table 10* have been corrected to remove 5,100 persons residing in the Sphere of Influence (SOI). The population in the SOI is not projected to change within the timeframe of the Draft Plan (refer to ABAG projections in *Table 7*).

Table 10. Comparison of ABAG Projected Population Growth and Rates of Growth for the City of Pleasant Hill (1999)*				
Year	ABAG Projected Population	ABAG Annual Growth Rate	GP Projected Population	GP Growth Rate
2000**	32,837	NA	32,837	
2005	34,400	0.65%		
2010	35,000	0.35%		
2015	35,400	0.23%		
2020	36,200	0.45%		
2025	(36,800)	NA	36,092	
Annual Rate Calculated over Horizon		0.46%	0.38%	
Source: ABAG Projections 2000				
* Formulas and calculations are included as Appendix C				
** 2000 Census				
*** Obtained by applying an average 5-year increase of 600 persons. Calculation at year 2020 yields an annual rate of 0.49%				

The Draft Plan projects a population of 36,092 in 2025 and an existing population of 32,837 in 2000. Therefore, over a period of 25 years, the plan projects an annual rate of growth of approximately 0.38%, which is below the rate of growth projected by ABAG for a similar time frame. The Draft Plan is therefore consistent with the CAP in this respect.

**VMT.** VMT is largely a function of commute patterns, namely, distance from major job centers, and the number of workers commuting to those job centers. Local trips for shopping and other errands are a relatively small component. VMT were not projected for the General Plan horizon year. The BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines note "in some cases, estimating total VMT at the general plan horizon year may be beyond the level of analysis historically conducted in assessing general plan impacts. Lead agencies may wish to consult with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the county congestion management agency for assistance in developing VMT estimates."

CMCA contacted the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), the acting congestion management agency for the City of Pleasant Hill. In the Contra Costa

Transportation Plan (2000), total VMT countywide (including I-680) was expected to increase 39% from 2000 to 2020, or 1.65% per year.<sup>20</sup> The current MTC Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) projects increases in VMT of approximately 11% countywide from 1998 to 2025, or 0.39% per year. The rates vary widely; the CCTA rate exceeds population growth projected in Pleasant Hill by 1.25% per year, while the MTC rate exceeds the population growth rate by 0.01%.

It should be noted, however, that projections are not specific to the City of Pleasant Hill. Both projections include the entire county and therefore are not appropriate indicators of city-specific VMT. VMT are expected to be greater in the eastern portion of the County due to greater distance from population centers. Growth is also occurring more rapidly to the east of Pleasant Hill. The City of Pleasant Hill is largely built out, and therefore can be expected to have more stable travel patterns. Therefore, it is important to describe VMT in a manner more applicable to Pleasant Hill.

On-road motor vehicles constitute the largest single source of emissions of ozone precursors within the BAAQMD. Accordingly, one of the goals of the CAP is to reduce motor vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by “capturing” more of these trips closer to their origin. A general plan can be found to be inconsistent with the CAP if it will accommodate a growth in vehicle miles traveled that exceeds the rate of population growth.

Reducing vehicle miles traveled can be accomplished by designating a complementary range of land uses (those that support jobs, shopping and housing, for example) in proximity so that trip origins are closer to trip destinations. In a largely urbanized area where a single vehicle trip may cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries, quantifying the growth of vehicle miles traveled attributable to any one jurisdiction

is difficult at best. A more useful assessment may be obtained by looking at whether or not the Draft Plan accommodates land uses within close proximity that have the potential to “capture” a larger portion of their regional commute trips, thereby reducing VMT.

*Provision of Adequate Housing and Jobs* – A balance of jobs and housing in a community can assist in the reduction in VMT. An adequate supply of housing (especially housing affordable to the median income) may indicate a reduction in the number of workers needing to travel into or out of a community to work. An adequate number of jobs may indicate a reduction in pressure to commute from the worker’s city of residence. Housing and jobs in Pleasant Hill were analyzed in the Housing Element; the results are outlined in *Table 11*.

<b>Table 11. Jobs and Households, 1990-2020</b>					
<b>Component</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Jobs</b>	18,980	19,730	20,450	21,350	22,470
<b>Households</b>	15,450	15,690	15,930	16,120	16,560
<b>Employed Residents</b>	22,400	23,700	24,900	25,400	26,300

The Draft Plan provides more housing over the plan horizon. Demand for housing has increased housing prices in Pleasant Hill beyond the means of some median-income workers and most low-income workers. Housing proposed in the Draft Plan indicates a shift towards multi-family housing, which is generally more affordable. Affordable housing can provide opportunities for service workers and others to reside in Pleasant Hill. Increases in affordable housing can therefore reduce the need for workers to travel into Pleasant Hill from less expensive housing markets, reducing VMT.

Jobs are also projected to increase over the life of the draft General Plan, which may indicate increased opportunities for residents to work locally. The main areas of increase are expected to be business, health, engineering and management, along with service.

<sup>20</sup> Martin Engleman, pers. comm.

**Low Population Growth** – Population growth in Pleasant Hill is expected to be relatively low compared to ABAG projections and growth in other portions of the County. Low growth may indicate a relatively stable population and demographic, which may also indicate a relatively stable VMT rate.

**Proposed Land Use Pattern** – The Draft Plan indicates a shift towards mixed use, where housing is located proximate to necessary commercial services and transit centers. Locating housing near services and transit may reduce vehicle trips, as residents are more likely to use alternate means of access, such as bicycling or walking to access services, and may be more likely to utilize transit opportunities. The Draft Plan also provides additional commercial space to accommodate demand, which may reduce resident trips to other communities for shopping and errands. Under the draft General Plan, commercial centers continue to be located in areas proximate to major transit routes.

**Employing Other Strategies Consistent with CAP Goals** – The Draft Plan contains policies and programs designed to increase use of alternative transportation, including buses, BART, foot travel, and bicycles. These policies include guidance for design to make such alternatives attractive.

The overall trend of workers commuting outside the City to work is expected to continue; however, the Draft Plan contains specific examples of land use changes and other strategies that support the reduction of VMT. Moreover, the growth rate for the City is below the ABAG projections. The Draft Plan is therefore considered consistent with the intent of the CAP regarding reduction in VMT.

? Is the local plan consistent with CAP transportation control measures and are such measures indeed being implemented?

Table 12 is adapted from the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines (Table 5 – CAP TCMs to be Implemented by Local Government). Table

12 includes an analysis of whether the specified TCM is included in the proposed General Plan.

The BAAQMD also requires that assessment include a determination of whether measures are indeed being implemented.

Based on the information provided in Table 12, the Draft Plan contains the necessary TCMs to be considered consistent with the CAP. Furthermore, evidence supports the conclusion that TCMs are being implemented.

? Are buffer zones established to avoid odors and toxics?

The Draft Plan does not establish specific buffer zones to avoid odors and toxics. The Draft Plan does state the following regarding toxics:

“State law requires sources emitting more than 10 tons per year of any toxic air pollutant to estimate and report emissions to the local air district, which then requires certain sources to submit a health risk assessment and communicate the results to the public. Facilities required to report toxic emissions in Pleasant Hill are limited to gas stations and dry cleaners.”

Odors are addressed in Section 35-16.14(B) of the Municipal Code as follows:

“No use, process, or activity shall produce objectionable odors that are perceptible without instruments by a reasonable person at the property line of a site.”

The Draft Plan does not contain policy language that directs the City to establish buffers around sources of odors and toxics. Therefore, the Draft Plan is considered inconsistent with the CAP in this respect. Impacts are potentially significant.

### Mitigation Measures

The following language shall be added under Safety and Noise Goal 8 in the proposed General Plan:

"The City shall identify sources of odors and toxics and amend the zoning ordinance to establish buffer zones around sources of odors and toxics. Buffer zones shall be established in consultation with the BAAQMD."

### **Residual Impacts**

The Draft Plan is considered consistent with the CAP with the addition of mitigation measures above; impacts associated with plan consistency are therefore considered less than significant.





**Table 12. Analysis of TCM Implementation**

TCM	Description	Draft Plan Policies and Programs	Implemented?
1. Support Voluntary Employer-Based Trip Reduction Measures	? Provide assistance to regional and local ridesharing organizations; advocate legislation to maintain and expand incentives (e.g., tax deductions/credits)	Circ Progs. 4.4, 4.6, 4.7	City teams on ridesharing
9. Improve Bicycle Access and Facilities	? Improve and expand bicycle lane systems by providing bicycle access in plans for all new road construction or modifications ? Establish and maintain bicycle advisory committees in all nine Bay Area counties ? Designate a staff person as a Bicycle Program Manager ? Develop and implement comprehensive bicycle plans ? Encourage employers and developers to provide bicycle access and facilities ? Provide bicycle safety education	Circ Pol. 4A, Progs. 4.1, 4.2	The City is working with Contra Costa County to prepare the Countywide Bicycle Plan. City also maintains numerous on street bike lanes as well as street crossings at trails
12. Improve arterial traffic management	? Study signal preemption for buses on arterials with high volumes of traffic ? Improve arterials for bus operations and to encourage bicycling and walking ? Continue and expand local signal timing programs, only where air quality benefits can be demonstrated	SN Goal 8, Prog. 8.3	City has received grants for signal synchronization projects on Contra Costa Blvd., Taylor Blvd. And Pleasant Hill Rd.
15. Local Clean Air Plans, Policies and Programs	? Incorporate air quality beneficial policies and programs into local planning and development activities, with a particular focus on subdivision, zoning and site design measures that reduce the number and length of single-occupant automobile trips	SN Goal 8, Pol. 8A, Prog. 8.1	City policy supports design for alternative transportation access and focuses on mixed use
17. Conduct demonstration projects	? Promote demonstration projects to develop new strategies to reduce motor vehicle emissions. Projects include: low emission vehicle fleets and LEV refueling infrastructure	SN Goal 8, Pol. 8B, Prog. 8.4	City will be involved in SEGWAY demonstration
19. Pedestrian Travel	? Review/revise general/specific plan policies to promote development patterns that encourage walking and circulation policies that emphasize pedestrian travel and modify zoning ordinances to include pedestrian-friendly design standards. ? Include pedestrian improvements in capital improvement programs ? Designate a staff person as a Pedestrian Program Manager	Circ Goal 4, Pol. 4A, 5A, Progs. 5.1, 5.2	City has a sidewalk construction program that focuses on parks and schools, as well as repair program for existing sidewalks
20. Promote Traffic Calming Measures	? Include traffic calming strategies in the transportation and land use elements of general and specific plans ? Include traffic calming strategies in capital	Circ Goal 3	City has an adopted Traffic Calming Policy



## 5.8 NOISE

### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan would increase the population of the City of Pleasant Hill, resulting in increased vehicle traffic and exposure to noise.

### Setting

Ambient noise in the city is largely a function of vehicle traffic, aircraft, and noise associated with general human activity. Sources of ground-borne noise and vibration in the area include BART and the Interstate 680.

The airport land use plan for Buchanan Field extends to areas within the city.

**Nature of noise.** Noise is typically expressed in decibels (dB). The decibel scale is logarithmic because of the physical characteristics associated with noise transmission and reception. For example, a 3.0-decibel (dB) increase in noise levels normally results in a doubling of *noise energy*; however, because of the structure of the human auditory system, a 10-decibel increase is required to perceive a doubling of *noise*. A 1- to 2-decibel change in ambient noise levels is generally not perceptible to the human ear. The A-weighted decibel (dBA) incorporates the human ear's sensitivity to sounds of different frequencies. On this scale, the sound level of normal talking is about 60 to 65 dBA.

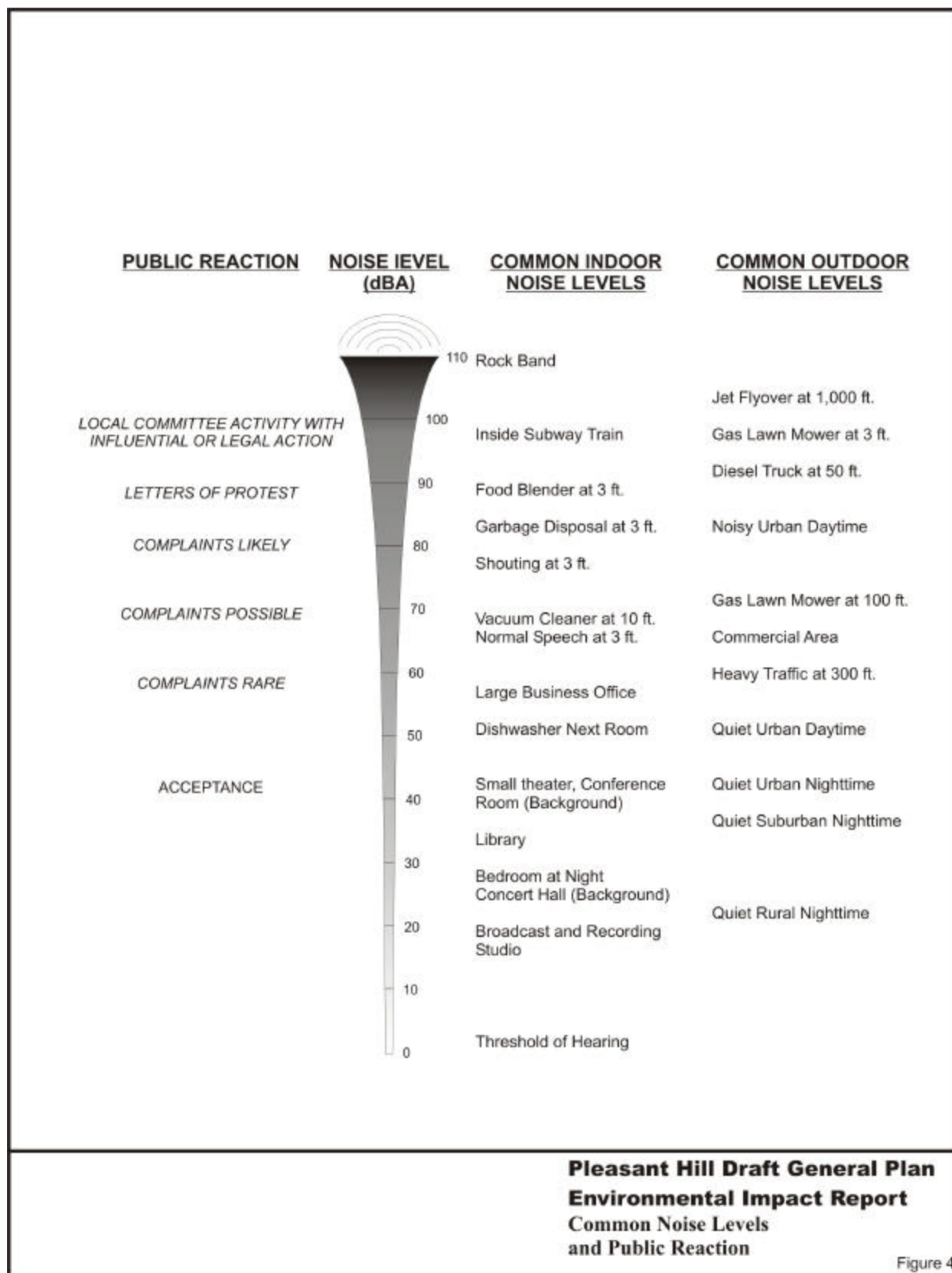
Noise levels diminish (or attenuate) as distance from the source increases based on an inverse square rule, but the rate constant varies with the type of sound source. Sound from point sources, such as industrial facilities, attenuates at a rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance. Heavily traveled roads with few gaps in traffic behave as continuous line sources with an attenuation rate of 3 dBA per doubling of distance. Otherwise, roads typically have an attenuation rate of 4.5 dBA.

Besides the decibel and A-weighted decibel scale, three other measurement scales are used in this EIR: Ldn, Leq and CNEL. Ldn refers to the equivalent energy (or energy average) sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of ten decibels to nighttime sound levels (after 10:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m.). The Ldn is generally computed for annual average conditions. Leq refers to the sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period. Thus, the Leq is a single-valued level that expresses the time-averaged total energy of a fluctuating sound level. For example, if 64 dB is measured for 10 minutes, 68 dB is measured for 20 minutes and 73 dB is measured for 30 minutes, the 1-hour Leq is 71 dB. The Leq is typically computed over 1, 8 and 24-hour sample periods. Another method of measuring noise is the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). Like the Ldn, the CNEL is a time weighted average value based on the equivalent sound level (Leq). CNEL penalizes evening (seven to 10:00 p.m.) noise levels by 5 dBA.

Table 13 – Perception of Changes in Noise Levels		
Increase in Sound Pressure Level, dB	Relative Increase in Acoustical Energy	Subjective Reaction
1	1.26 times	Minimum Detectable Change (Lab)
3	2.0 times	Usually Noticeable Change
5	3.2 times	Definitely Noticeable Change
10	10.0 times	Twice as Loud as Before

Noise levels are shown on topographic maps by using noise contours (lines indicating a generally uniform level of noise).

**Health Effects of Noise.** Excessive noise is undesirable and may cause physical and/or psychological damage. The amount of annoyance or damage caused by noise is dependent primarily upon three factors: the amount and nature of the noise, the amount of ambient noise present before the intruding noise, and the activity of the person working or living in the noise source area. The amount of noise is measured by the indices described above. Noise ranges from constant background noise to more individualized noise events. Types of noise and public response to these sounds are shown in *Figure 4*. The amount of ambient noise present before the project is also important; a relatively low level of noise will have a much greater impact on a quiet, rural environment than an urban environment.



Some activities and land uses are more sensitive to noise than others are. Noise-sensitive land uses include residences, schools, health care services, churches, public assembly facilities, libraries, museums, hotels and motels, outdoor recreation areas, and offices.

Health effects of noise can be characterized as auditory or non-auditory. Auditory effects include interference with communication and, in extreme circumstances, hearing loss. Non-auditory effects include physiological reactions such as change in blood pressure or breathing rate, interference with sleep, adverse affects in human performance, and annoyance.

### Regulatory Setting

**City of Pleasant Hill.** Section 35-16.14 of the Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance sets standards for the maximum allowable noise exposure from both transportation and stationary sources for residential land uses at 50 dBA. Public Safety Section 5.1 of the Municipal Code places limits on specific noise-producing activities (such as amplified music, vehicle exhaust and repair, and construction), including prohibitions during night and weekend hours.

The State Building Code contains noise insulation standards that require an acoustical study whenever outdoor noise levels (annualized CNEL) would exceed 60 decibels at a proposed duplex, multifamily residence, hotel, motel or other attached dwelling. The study must show that the proposed project design would result in interior noise levels of 45 decibels or less.

### Significance Thresholds

Impacts are considered significant if implementation of the Draft Plan would:

- ? Expose persons to or generate excessive groundbourne vibration or groundbourne noise levels;

- ? Create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels above levels existing without the project; or,
- ? Create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels above those existing without the project.

A substantial increase is defined as an audible increase, or 3 or more decibels.

### Impacts

**Groundbourne Vibration and Noise.** Sources of ground-borne noise and vibration in the area include BART and I680. Continued development in these areas may expose additional residents to ground-borne noise and vibration. Project-specific assessment of impacts from ground-borne vibration and noise are not feasible at the programmatic level; detailed site-specific and ambient factors must be understood prior to determining impact.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

#### Noise

**Safety and Noise Goal 7. Protect persons from noise that interferes with human activity or causes health problems.**

Safety and Noise Policy 7A. Require new development projects to be designed and constructed to meet acceptable noise level standards adopted by the City.

Safety and Noise Policy 7B. Evaluate the noise impacts of development based on the potential for significant increases in noise levels, in addition to acceptability standards.

*Safety and Noise Program 7.1. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish acceptable exterior noise level standards for all new developments and additions, including capital improvement projects.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.2. Use the City noise contour map to determine when acoustical studies shall be required.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.3. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to stipulate the specific noise level increases for mobile and stationary sources that will be considered significant.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.4. Lobby Caltrans to resurface all concrete roads between the Walnut Creek city limit and Highway 242 to reduce vehicle noise.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.5. Monitor the proceedings and actions of the Airport Land Use Commission, the County, and the Federal Aviation Administration with respect to operations at Buchanan Field, and inform Pleasant Hill residents of opportunities to participate in relevant public meetings and provide timely comments to these agencies.*

*Safety and Noise Program 7.6. Mitigate the impact of noise on residential areas from such activities as commercial garbage pickup and parking lot vacuuming during nighttime hours.*

**Vibration.** Vibration is addressed in Section 36-16.14 (A) of the Municipal Code as follows:

“No use, activity, or process shall produce vibrations that are perceptible without instruments by a reasonable person at the property lines of a site.”

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Add Program 7.7: “Evaluate the impacts of vibration when considering proposed development near I-680.”

#### **Residual Impacts**

Ground-borne noise and vibration are generally associated with construction (Section 5.10), and I-680. Impacts are addressed through policies contained in the Draft Plan and those added above. Refer also to Section 5.10, Construction Impacts.

**Permanent Noise Increases.** Continued development in the area, including

projected increases in vehicle trips, may increase noise above existing levels. However, it would take more than a 25 percent increase in average daily trips (ADT) in a specific location to generate one additional decibel of noise; an increase in ADT of more than 75 percent is required to achieve an increase of 3 decibels.<sup>21</sup> Based on the traffic projections contained in the CTP (refer to Appendix B), the only roadway projected to have traffic increases of 75 percent or greater is Contra Costa Boulevard/North Main Street. Increases on other major roadways range from 22 percent to 53 percent. Impacts are therefore potentially significant along Contra Costa Boulevard and are less than significant in other locations.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

Safety and Noise Policy 7B. Evaluate the noise impacts of development based on the potential for significant increases in noise levels, in addition to acceptability standards.

Refer also to policies and programs cited in the previous section.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Amend the Draft Plan to include the following program:

“Monitor noise along Contra Costa Boulevard/North Main Street and identify appropriate methods to rectify unacceptable noise levels in the vicinity of noise-sensitive uses.”

#### **Residual Impacts**

Although the Draft Plan includes policies to address noise in new development, and mitigation is provided above for existing development, it may be infeasible to reduce noise to acceptable levels along Contra Costa Boulevard/North Main Street.

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<sup>21</sup> Brown Buntin Associates, *San Luis Obispo County General Plan Noise Element Technical Reference Document*, 1992

Impacts associated with traffic noise in this area are therefore considered significant and unavoidable.

**Airport Noise.** The airport land use plan for Buchanan Field extends to areas within the city. Continued development in this area will expose additional persons to noise from aircraft. Increases in airport activity are not expected to produce a significant change in perceived noise levels in Pleasant Hill: the 35 percent expected growth in airport operations would contribute only 1.3 decibels to the ambient environment.<sup>22</sup> Impacts are considered less than significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

Refer to policies and programs cited under Goal 7 in previous sections.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts associated with airport noise and groundbourne noise and vibration are considered less than significant because of policies contained in the Draft Plan and mitigation identified above. Impacts associated with traffic noise are considered significant and unavoidable.

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<sup>22</sup> Pleasant Hill General Plan Background Report, 2001



## 5.9 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

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### BACKGROUND

The Growth Management Element, pursuant to Measure C, regulates provision of public services in the City of Pleasant Hill. It meets the requirements of the Contra Costa Transportation Improvement and Growth Management Program by establishing a comprehensive, long-range program to match demand for public facilities generated by new development with the plans of service providers, capital improvement programs and development mitigation programs.

In addition to specifying traffic level of service standards, Measure C requires each jurisdiction to establish standards for parks, fire and police protection, sanitary facilities, water, and flood control.

The City has adopted the following performance standards:

*Water Supply* – verification from water authorities that adequate water quality, quantity and distribution can be provided. Additional reservoirs or distribution system improvements would be financed from the capital improvement funds for the districts, which are derived from water rates and connection fees.

*Sewage Disposal* – verification by the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District that adequate collection and treatment can be provided. Developer fees paid to the District fund capacity increases.

*Schools* – verification by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District that adequate capacity is available for new residential development. School impact fees from developers cover part of the cost of expanding and maintaining school facilities.

*Parks and Open Space* – 3 acres per 1,000 residents added are to be acquired as

enabled by State law (Quimby Act). Land dedication or payment of in-lieu fees is a condition of approval of residential subdivisions. Parkland is acquired by the City and then transferred to the Pleasant Hill Recreation and Park District for development and maintenance.

*Fire Protection* – verification by the Contra Costa County Fire District that fire protection can be provided within a 5-minute response time. Service improvements are funded from a variety of sources, including developer fees and County set-aside capital improvement funds.

*Police* – verification by the Pleasant Hill Police Department that emergency response can be provided within 5 minutes and that 20 minute response can be maintained for 95 percent of non-emergency calls. The Police Department budget is a City general fund expenditure.

*Storm Drainage* – verification by the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City Public Works Department that adequate storm drainage facilities exist or are funded. The City collects storm drainage fees as a condition of development.

The Growth Management Element does not address solid waste.

### WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

#### Issues

The implementation of the Draft Plan would place additional demand on water supplies and distribution systems.

#### Setting

The primary source of water for Pleasant Hill is the surface water of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, transported via the Contra Costa Canal. The Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) treats this water and provides it directly to the area of Pleasant Hill generally east of Pleasant Hill Road.

Other water purveyors servicing Pleasant Hill include the Diablo Valley Water District, the East Bay Municipal District (EBMUD), and the Martinez Water District. CCWD provides untreated water to Diablo Valley Water District and the Martinez Water District. Therefore, CCWD supplies serve the majority of the City (refer to *Figure 5*). EBMUD serves areas in the western hills, which are not proposed to grow under the Draft Plan.

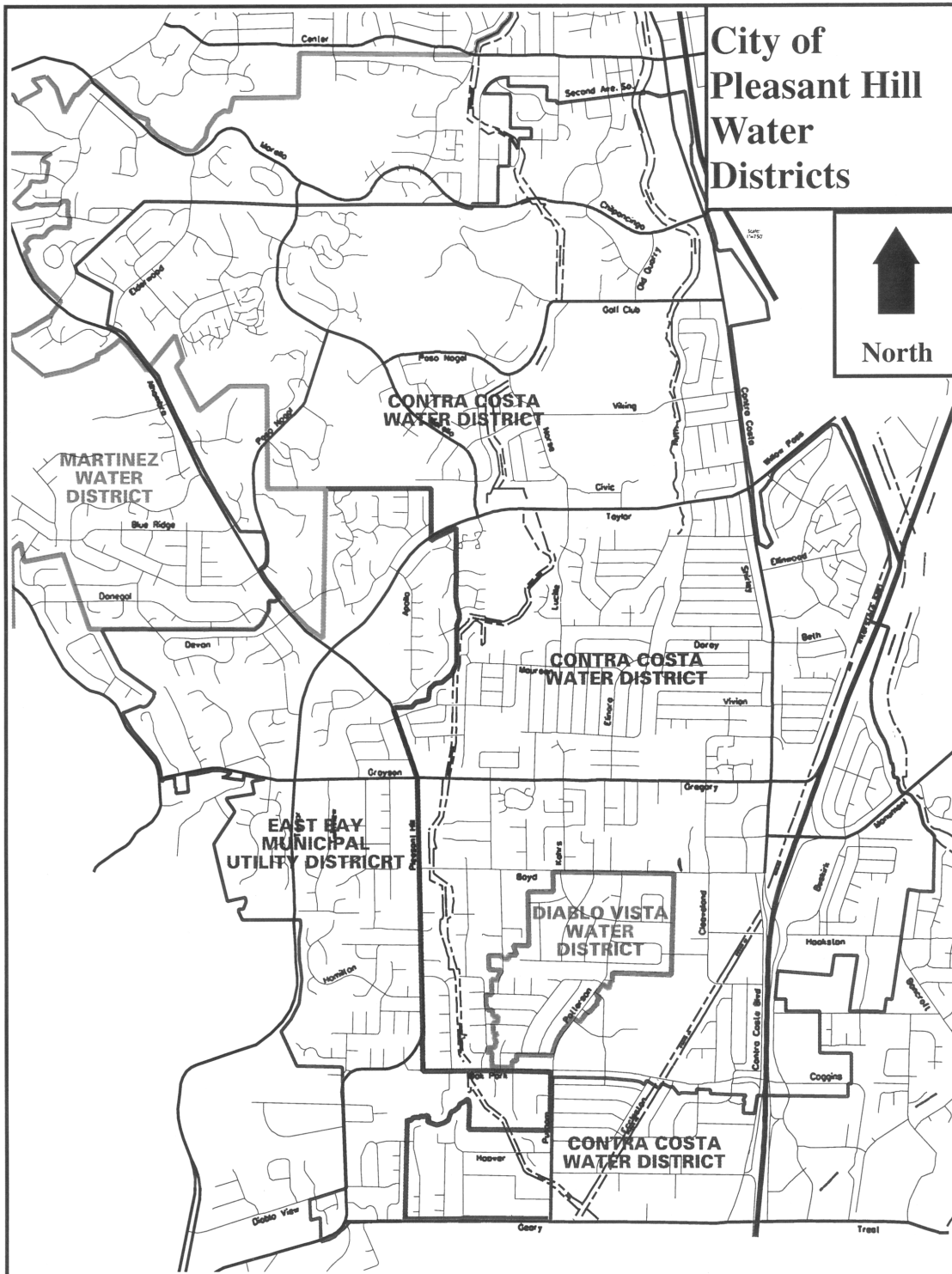


Figure 5.

## Regulatory Setting

Refer to information regarding Measure C in the Background section.

## Significance Thresholds

Impacts are considered significant if water supply or distribution facilities would be inadequate to service buildout of the Draft Plan.

## Impacts

The City of Pleasant Hill receives the majority of its water from the CCWD. At the time of distribution of the NOP, a request was made to CCWD for an assessment of available water supply pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15083.5. No response was received, however, the CCWD was contacted again and provided the following information:

The CCWD Future Water Supply Study, prepared in 1996, assessed demand and potential supply in the CCWD service area. The Study is the primary planning document for the CCWD. According to the CCWD Study, the CCWD in has approximately 242,700 AF/Y in available supply. Current demand (wholesale and retail 2002) totals approximately 120,000 AF/Y (49%).<sup>23</sup> Since 1996, CCWD has updated their demand projections, including those for the City Pleasant Hill. Current demand figures for Pleasant Hill are based on the existing General Plan, as amended through 1999.

The Draft Plan includes a number of minor changes to land use assumptions used in the most recent demand projections. When compared to the existing General Plan, the Draft Plan results in an increase of 1,737 residents, or a 5 percent increase in population over the assumptions used in the CCWD Study. Assuming 2.35 persons per dwelling unit and a demand factor of 0.4 acre-feet per year (AF/Y), the changes proposed to the existing General Plan under the Draft Plan would result in additional

demand of approximately 300 AF/Y over the current CCWD assumptions. This represents 0.12% of the current supply.

The CCWD anticipates that augmentations to their existing supply will be required to meet future (year 2040) demand. The Study identified a preferred alternative to meet demand. The preferred alternative includes increased conservation and water transfers. The preferred alternative has not changed since 1996. Although the current CCWD assumptions for Pleasant Hill are lower than proposed in the Draft Plan, changes proposed in the Draft Plan are not expected to have a cumulatively considerable impact to long-term CCWD planning. However, mitigation is recommended to ensure consistency.

Impacts associated with water demand are also mitigated by the Growth Management Element, which requires assurance of water supplies prior to project approval.

## Policies which Address Potential Impacts

### **Community Development Goal 11. Ensure adequacy of water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste services.**

Community Development Policy 11A. Ensure that basic services are provided to proposed development, and that the provision of those services does not jeopardize service to existing uses.

*Community Development Program 11.1. Consult with water providers and the Sanitary District prior to approving development.*

### **Growth Management Goal 2. Approve new development only after finding that the adopted performance standards are met.**

Growth Management Policy 2A. Require all new development to contribute to or participate in the improvement of park, school, fire, police, sanitary, water and flood control services in proportion to the demand generated by project occupants and users.

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<sup>23</sup> Jeff Quimby, pers. comm.

*Growth Management Program 2.1. Continue to implement a development mitigation program to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with the provision of facilities for fire, police, park, sewage disposal, water, flood control, and school services.*

*Growth Management Program 2.2. Continue to approve development projects only after finding that one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- ✍ Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;*
- ✍ The characteristics of the development project require project-specific mitigation measures to maintain standards, and such measures will be required of the project sponsor;*
- ✍ Capital projects planned by the City or special district(s) will result in maintenance of standards.*

*Growth Management Program 2.3. Identify in the City's Capital Improvement Program those projects sponsored by the City and necessary to maintain levels of performance, along with phasing and funding sources to cover the cost of the projects.*

#### **Community Development Goal 23. Conserve natural resources.**

Community Development Policy 23A. Give priority to development that incorporates energy-efficient and resource-conserving design and construction.

*Community Development Program 23.1. Design new public buildings to exceed State standards for water and energy efficiency.*

*Community Development Program 23.7. Work with the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District to expand the use of recycled and other non-potable water for landscape irrigation and other appropriate uses.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Amend the Draft Plan to include the following policy:

"Monitor the CCWD's progress towards additional supplies. Coordinate with the CCWD to amend the Future Water Supply Study demand projections to accurately reflect the Draft Plan buildout."

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant because of performance standards, policies and programs included in the Growth Management Element of the Draft Plan. The Growth Management Element provides for analysis of project-specific impacts to water to mitigate impacts on an incremental basis. Long-term impacts are not considered cumulatively considerable because of mitigation included above.

#### **WASTEWATER**

##### **Issues**

Implementation of the Draft Plan would increase demand for wastewater treatment.

##### **Setting**

**Treatment Capacity.** The Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San) collects and disposes Pleasant Hill wastewater, which is treated at a plant in an unincorporated area adjacent to Martinez. Average dry weather flow for the 165 square mile district in 1999 was 39.6 million gallons per day (mgd), 74 percent of the 53.8 mgd allowed under its current National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit.

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board recently approved the increase in Central San's effluent discharge limit to 53.8 mgd to accommodate planned growth of 111,000

people in the service area over the next 35 years. The increase also would accommodate worst-case scenarios for groundwater infiltration. Infiltration during high rainfall years can significantly raise groundwater levels during the summer months.

Central San has built a relief interceptor from the treatment plant south to Taylor Boulevard to parallel an existing, large-diameter sewer under Contra Costa Boulevard. Studies indicate that some segments of the Pleasant Hill sewer system will be deficient during extreme rain events. A relief interceptor is therefore planned for construction south from Taylor Boulevard to Ardith Drive along Gregory Lane and a portion of Boyd Road.<sup>24</sup>

### Regulatory Setting

Refer to information regarding Measure C.

### Significance Thresholds

Impacts are considered significant if the implementation of the Draft Plan would result in wastewater generation exceeding available treatment capacity.

### Impacts

Development of land uses proposed in the Draft Plan will increase wastewater generation. Generation factors are applied to proposed land uses to determine total flow. Generation factors are from the March 2000 Update of the Central San Collection System Master Plan (225 gpd for single family units, 150 gpd for multi-family units, and 1,000 gallons per day per acre of non-residential land use).

Table 14. Wastewater Generation Calculation – Draft General Plan					
Land Use	Existing		Proposed		Additional
	units	mgd	units	gpd	
Single Family	8,571	1.93	8,803	1.98	0.05
Multi Family	4,835	0.73	6,249	0.94	0.21
Non-residential*	4336.5	0.10	4801.5	0.11	0.01

\* In 1000's of square feet

The Draft Plan would result in incremental additional flows to Central San's collection system and treatment plant. Central San has received approval for increased effluent levels, and does not anticipate additional construction at their plant over the next 35 years. The Growth Management Element addresses provision of wastewater collection and treatment facilities on a project-by-project basis, ensuring that adequate facilities are available prior to development.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

**Community Development Goal 11. Ensure adequacy of water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste services.**

Community Development Policy 11A. Ensure that basic services are provided to proposed development, and that the provision of those services does not jeopardize service to existing uses.

*Community Development Program 11.1. Consult with water providers and the Sanitary District prior to approving development.*

### Mitigation Measures

No additional measures are required.

### Residual Impacts

Residual impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs included in the Growth Management Element of the Draft Plan.

<sup>24</sup> Russ Leavitt, pers. comm.

## **POLICE PROTECTION**

### **Issues**

The implementation of the Draft Plan would increase the demand on police services.

### **Setting**

The Pleasant Hill Police Department employs 40 officers, 20 civilian employees and 12 volunteer reserve officers. Service ratios are currently 1 sworn officer per every 820 people (or 1.2 officers per thousand); when volunteer officers are included, the ratio becomes 1.6 per thousand. Prior to project approval, the City requires written verification by the Pleasant Hill Police Department that emergency response can be provided within 5 minutes and that 20-minute response can be maintained for 95 percent of non-emergency calls.

### **Significance Thresholds**

Impacts are considered significant if acceptable response times could not be maintained.

### **Impacts**

The implementation of the Draft Plan will place additional demand upon police services. However, the Draft Plan concentrates development in the downtown area, improving response time for police. The Growth Management Element provides performance standards that must be met by proposed development, ensuring adequate response time.

### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

**Growth Management Goal 2. Approve new development only after finding that the adopted performance standards are met.**

Growth Management Policy 2A. Require all new development to contribute to or

participate in the improvement of park, school, fire, police, sanitary, water and flood control services in proportion to the demand generated by project occupants and users.

*Growth Management Program 2.1. Continue to implement a development mitigation program to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with the provision of facilities for fire, police, park, sewage disposal, water, flood control, and school services.*

*Growth Management Program 2.2. Continue to approve development projects only after finding that one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- ✍ Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;*
- ✍ The characteristics of the development project require project-specific mitigation measures to maintain standards, and such measures will be required of the project sponsor;*
- ✍ Capital projects planned by the City or special district(s) will result in maintenance of standards.*

### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to the Growth Management Element of the Draft Plan.

## **FIRE PROTECTION**

### **Issues**

The implementation of the Draft Plan would increase the demand on fire protection equipment and personnel.

### **Setting**

The Contra Costa County Consolidated Fire Protection District maintains its headquarters and communications center at 2010 Geary

Road in Pleasant Hill. The Fire District also operates two fire stations in the city: Station 2 adjacent to headquarters and Station 5 at 205 Boyd Road. Each station employs nine firefighters, working three at a time on three shifts, with one paramedic on duty at all times. Each station houses one engine, with advanced life support equipment, that typically responds anywhere in the city within four minutes. (The District standard for maximum allowable response time is five minutes.) The communications center employs a manager and 14 dispatchers.

Wildfire potential exists in the western and northwestern portions of the city due to the presence of chaparral and grassland vegetation, especially on hillsides. The City weed abatement program requires 15-foot fire breaks for larger parcels and removal of tall grasses and weeds on smaller lots and within 50 feet of structures.

### Significance Thresholds

A project could have a significant impact on fire protection services if the current service level could not be achieved or maintained.

### Impacts

Continued development throughout the City would place additional demand on fire services. The Draft Plan concentrates development in the downtown, improving the ability of fire personnel to respond to emergencies. The City also requires written verification by the Contra Costa County Fire District that fire protection can be provided within a 5-minute response time.

Development of vacant parcels in the western and northwestern portions of the City will expose persons to risk of loss, damage or death from wildfire. The Draft Plan does not change the existing land use pattern in the more outlying areas of the City; therefore, the implementation of the plan is not expected to substantially increase risk of loss from wildfire.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

#### **Growth Management Goal 2. Approve new development only after finding that the adopted performance standards are met.**

Growth Management Policy 2A. Require all new development to contribute to or participate in the improvement of park, school, fire, police, sanitary, water and flood control services in proportion to the demand generated by project occupants and users.

*Growth Management Program 2.1. Continue to implement a development mitigation program to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with the provision of facilities for fire, police, park, sewage disposal, water, flood control, and school services.*

*Growth Management Program 2.2. Continue to approve development projects only after finding that one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- ✍ Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;*
- ✍ The characteristics of the development project require project-specific mitigation measures to maintain standards, and such measures will be required of the project sponsor;*
- ✍ Capital projects planned by the City or special district(s) will result in maintenance of standards.*

#### **Safety and Noise Goal 4. Minimize the threat to people, property and the environment from fire hazards.**

Safety and Noise Policy 4A. Enhance the ability of the Fire District to respond to and suppress fires.

Safety and Noise Policy 4B. Encourage weed abatement.

*Safety and Noise Program 4.1. Assist the Fire District with training and other efforts when feasible.*

*Safety and Noise Program 4.2. Work with the Fire District to review development plans to*



*assure adequacy of access for equipment, water supplies, construction standards, and vegetation clearance.*

*Safety and Noise Program 4.3. Work with landowners to ensure that weed abatement occurs in an effective and timely manner.*

## Mitigation Measures

No additional measures are required.

## Residual Impacts

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan.

## SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

### Issues

The implementation of the Draft Plan would increase the amount of solid waste generated in the City.

### Setting

Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal, a private company, is contracted to pick up solid waste, recyclable materials, and green waste within the city and its environs. The sole repository of solid waste for the City of Pleasant Hill is Keller Canyon Landfill.<sup>25</sup> Keller Canyon Landfill totals 2,600 acres, 244 of which are currently permitted for disposal of municipal waste. The landfill currently accepts 2,500 tons per day (tpd), 71% of its permitted amount of 3,500 tpd. At current rates of disposal, the staff at the landfill expects the landfill life to be 50 years; the landfill is currently 7% full.<sup>26</sup>

The City of Pleasant Hill generated a total of 32,874 tons of solid waste in 2000 (90 tpd). Household waste averaged 21,697 tons per year (tpy), at an average rate of 3.6 pounds per resident per day.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Staff, Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal, pers. comm.

<sup>26</sup> Norm Christianson, Manager, pers. comm.

<sup>27</sup> [www.ciwmb.ca.gov](http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov)

The City was required by State law to divert 50% of its waste by January 1, 2000. Table 15 outlines the diversion rates recorded for Pleasant Hill over the period from 1995-2000.

Table 15. Solid Waste Diversion Rate – Pleasant Hill	
Year	Percent Diversion
1995	16
1996	29
1997	28
1998	34
1999	29*
2000	37*
Source: <a href="http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov">www.ciwmb.ca.gov</a> * Preliminary calculation, report not final	

According to available information, Pleasant Hill has not achieved the mandated 50% diversion rate.

## Significance Thresholds

Impacts to solid waste are considered significant if the amount of solid waste generated would deplete landfill capacity such that new disposal areas would have to be constructed.

## Impacts

Implementation of the Draft Plan would increase solid waste generation and demand for disposal capacity. The Draft Plan will accommodate 3,137 additional persons in the City. At an average rate of 3.6 pounds per resident per day, the population may increase solid waste generation by approximately 1,650 tpy (4.5 tpd).

The addition of 4.5 tons per day will not significantly affect the storage capacity of the Keller Canyon Landfill. Impacts are less than significant.

Increases in solid waste generation may hinder efforts to achieve the 50% diversion rate. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

## Policies which Address Potential Impacts

**Community Development Goal 11.**  
**Ensure adequacy of water supply, sewage disposal, and solid waste services.**

Community Development Policy 11A. Ensure that basic services are provided to proposed development, and that the provision of those services does not jeopardize service to existing uses.

*Community Development Program 11.2. Continue to improve on recycling efforts.*

*Community Development Policy 23B. Support and expand recycling programs for residential, commercial and industrial uses.*

*Community Development Program 23.6. Work with Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal to continue to improve citywide recycling programs.*

## Mitigation Measures

Amend Programs 11.2, 23B, and 23.6 to include:

"...with the goal of attaining the mandated 50% diversion rate."

## Residual Impacts

Impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan and additional language included above.

## SCHOOLS

### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan will increase the school-age population in the City.

## Setting

The Mt. Diablo Unified School District covers

Table 16. Public School Enrollment			
School	Enrollment	Capacity	% Capacity
Fair Oaks Elementary	460	486	95
Gregory Gardens Elementary	465	462	101
Pleasant Hill Elementary	645	666	97
Sequoia Elementary	604	558	108
Strandwood Elementary	467	582	80
Valhalla Elementary	554	654	85
<i>Elementary Subtotal</i>	<i>3,195</i>	<i>3,408</i>	
Pleasant Hill Middle	763	859	89
Sequoia Middle	738	935	79
Valley View Middle	716	946	76
<i>Middle Subtotal</i>	<i>2,217</i>	<i>2,740</i>	
College Park High	1828	1607	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,240</b>	<b>7,755</b>	

150 square miles, including the cities of Pleasant Hill, Concord and Clayton, as well as portions of Walnut Creek, Lafayette and Martinez, and unincorporated areas including Pacheco and Bay Point. Table 16 shows current enrollment at Pleasant Hill public schools.

Pleasant Hill also is home to a number of private schools, including:

- ? Center for Professional Investigative Training, 2645 Pleasant Hill Rd.
- ? Christ the King Catholic School, 195 Brandon Rd
- ? Discoveryland, 800 Grayson Rd.
- ? Foundation College, 3478 Buskirk Ave.
- ? Horizons School, 3100 Oak Park Boulevard
- ? Fountainhead Montessori School, 490 Golf Club Rd.
- ? La Cheim School, 1700 Oak Park Boulevard
- ? Mary Jane's Pre-School & Kindergarten, 2902 Vessing Rd.
- ? Mt. Diablo Vocational Services, 490 Golf Club Rd.
- ? Play and Learn School, 1898 Pleasant Hill Rd.
- ? Pleasant Hill Junior Academy, 796 Grayson Rd.

- ? Walnut Creek Christian Academy, 2336 Buena Vista Ave.
- ? Western Career College, 380 Civic Dr.
- ? YMCA Child Care Centers, 350 Civic Drive

Diablo Valley College (DVC) is one of three colleges in the Contra Costa Community College District, founded in 1948. DVC serves 22,000 students of a broad age range and is a leader in transfer of students to the State university system, especially UC Davis and UC Berkeley.

### Regulatory Setting

School districts are limited in their ability to charge fees to mitigate the impact of new development by Government Code Section 65970. In order to collect the fees allowed by the statute, school districts must prepare a study documenting the need for such fees and the facilities for which the fees will be used. As of 1990, the fee is \$1.85 per square foot of new residential construction and \$0.36 per square foot on commercial and industrial development.

*Source: Mt. Diablo Unified School District, 2000.*

For many school districts, this fee is not sufficient to cover the actual cost of new school facilities generated by each new student. Other funding sources, such as the sale of school facilities bonds, have helped bridge this gap. Another approach is for school districts to enter into agreements with local jurisdictions (cities and counties) for additional mitigation, usually in the form of supplemental fees.

Refer also to information regarding Measure C.

### Significance Thresholds

A project could have a significant impact on school facilities if the cost of providing such additional facilities exceeds the impact fee school districts may collect in accordance with State law and no supplemental source of funding is available to cover the difference.

### Impacts

Implementation of the Draft Plan will place additional demand upon schools in the area that already experience capacity problems. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

### Policies which Address Potential Impacts

#### **Community Development Goal 12. Promote excellence in public education.**

Community Development Policy 12A. Acknowledge the critical contribution of schools to the socioeconomic health of the city.

Community Development Policy 12B. Help ensure that high-quality teaching and facilities are provided to all students.

*Community Development Program 12.1. Work with public and private schools in teacher recruitment, facilities planning, housing and other key efforts.*

*Community Development Program 12.2. Continue to address issues of concern to the Pleasant Hill Schools with the Mount Diablo Unified School District through the City's Education/ Schools Advisory Commission.*

#### **Community Development Goal 13. Facilitate lifelong learning and promote coordinated residential and school development.**

Community Development Policy 13A. Improve communication and cooperative interaction among the City, School District, pre-schools, Diablo Valley College, and the Recreation and Park District.

Community Development Policy 13B. Establish strong physical and cultural connections between the City, Diablo Valley College, and local schools that result in creative, proactive opportunities for cooperation.

Community Development Policy 13C. Promote the design and use of elementary

schools as focal points for neighborhood social, cultural, vocational and recreational activities, and performing arts venues.

*Community Development Program 13.1. Work with the School District to identify appropriate locations for new or upgraded schools, facilities, additions and improvements.*

*Community Development Program 13.2. Establish a Diablo Valley College liaison to address issues of mutual concern and potential community-wide benefit.*

*Community Development Program 13.3. Request that the School District continue to collect school impact fees for new residential development.*

*Economic Strategy Program 2.1. Permit additional retail, commercial, and light industrial uses in appropriate locations, but require such uses to mitigate their impacts on schools, residential areas, and traffic.*

*Economic Strategy Policy 4C. Consider the impact of new commercial projects and substantial enlargements or additions on schools and public agencies.*

*Economic Strategy Program 4.5. When reviewing new developments and substantial enlargements or additions, ensure to the degree possible that there are no unintended negative economic impacts on the school district or other public agencies.*

*Growth Management Policy 2A. Require all new development to contribute to or participate in the improvement of park, school, fire, police, sanitary, water and flood control services in proportion to the demand generated by project occupants and users.*

*Growth Management Program 2.1. Continue to implement a development mitigation program to ensure that new growth pays its share of the costs associated with the provision of facilities for fire, police, park, sewage disposal, water, flood control, and school services.*

*Growth Management Program 2.2. Continue to approve development projects only after finding that one or more of the following conditions are met:*

- ? *Performance standards will be maintained following project occupancy;*
- ? *The characteristics of the development project require project-specific mitigation measures to maintain standards, and such measures will be required of the project sponsor;*
- ? *Capital projects planned by the City or special district(s) will result in maintenance of standards.*

### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are required.

### **Residual Impacts**

Residual impacts are considered less than significant because of policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan. The Draft Plan provides guidance for compensatory funding of school facilities.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

### **Issues**

The implementation of the Draft Plan would increase demand for park and recreational space.

### **Setting**

The City has adopted a standard of three acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents (which would require 100 acres for the estimated current population of 33,300). The Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District maintains 203.5 acres of parkland and open space in the City (with 74.0 developed acres), including the portion of the Contra Costa Canal Trail that runs through Pleasant Hill (see *Table 17*). Recreation facilities at public schools, which are used through written agreements with the Mt. Diablo

school district account for another 61.5 acres. Private open space and other common areas in subdivisions provide another 130 acres.

<b>Table 17. Public Recreation, Park and Open Space</b>	
<b>Site</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Brookwood Park	6.3
Chilpancingo Park	2.5
Community Center/Frank Salfingere Park	6.3
Contra Costa Canal Trail	--
Diablo Valley Estates Open Space	4.0
Dinosaur Hill Park	13.6
Las Juntas Park	7.0
Paso Nogal Park	63.0
Pinewood Park	0.5
Pleasant Hill Park	16.5
Pleasant Oaks Park	11.5
Ridgeview Open Space	57.0
Rodgers/Smith Park	4.5
Rodgers Ranch	2.1
School House Cultural Center	1.9
Senior Center	0.8
Shadowood Park	2.6
Shannon Hills Park	2.1
Valley High II Open Space	12.1
Valley High IV Open Space	11.0
Valley High V Open Space	4.6
Valley High Open Space	7.0
Winslow Center	3.1
Woodside Hills I Open Space	7.2
Woodside Hills III Open Space	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>203.5</b>

Source: Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District, 2002.

### Significance Thresholds

A project would have a significant adverse impact on parks if it generated a demand for new parkland that would hinder efforts to achieve the desired ratio of parkland to population.

### Impacts

Although the implementation of the Draft Plan could result in an increased population, current park acreage would be sufficient to meet future needs (107 acres). Impacts are considered less than significant.

### Mitigation Measures

No mitigation necessary

### Residual Impacts

Residual impacts are less than significant.

## 5.10 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

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### Issues

Implementation of the Draft Plan will result in a number of impacts associated with construction of individual projects.

### Setting

**Air Quality.** Construction results in short-term emissions from equipment and vehicle traffic, as well as dust generated by grading and excavation. Emissions of concern generally associated with construction include NOx and PM10.

**Geology and Soils.** Construction can increase the likelihood of erosion, landslide, and other geologic risks primarily through soil disturbance. Underlying soil characteristics, such as expansivity, corrosivity, and contamination, also factor into the construction and planning process.

**Water Quality and Hydrology.** Construction can affect the quality of nearby waterways and can affect the hydrology of the area. Water quality can be affected by soil disturbance, resulting in an increased likelihood of erosion, and accidental spill or release of construction fuels or wastes. Hydrology can be affected by grading, which can alter the pattern of flow across a site, and increases in impervious surfaces, such as pavement, which affect infiltration.

**Noise.** Construction noise is associated with the operation of equipment and vehicle traffic. Noise from construction, while short in duration, has a high likelihood of impact to noise sensitive uses, especially if the project consists of infill or redevelopment. Projects that are proximate to existing residences and other noise-sensitive development,

**Traffic.** Construction traffic is generally restricted to a specific period, and consists mainly of hauling and equipment transport.

Construction can also affect traffic safety by use of detours and haul routes.

### Significance Thresholds

A discussion of impacts from construction at the General Plan EIR level is limited by a lack of specificity regarding individual projects. Therefore, the analysis herein is made in the interest of providing information to the public and decision makers regarding potential future effects of construction as a whole; no attempt is made to analyze a specific project.

Construction impacts are considered significant if the project would:

- ? Exceed emissions standards
- ? Result in substantial grading which affects soil stability
- ? Result in grading which substantially alters hydrologic flows
- ? Result in substantial increase in impermeable surfaces reducing infiltration capability
- ? Result in a substantial increase in short-term noise levels near sensitive receptors
- ? Result in dangerous traffic conditions, or a substantial increase in short-term traffic on a street segment.

Future projects will be analyzed for environmental impacts as part of the permit review process.

### Impacts

**Air Quality.** Projects proposed under the Draft Plan may exceed emissions standards. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) sets guidelines for determination of the significance of construction impacts in their CEQA Guidelines (1999 Revised). Emissions from specific construction projects can be determined through a number of methods, including:

- ? Application of EPA emissions factors to a project type
- ? Application of emissions factors to a more specific project
- ? Modeling of emissions using the URBEMIS software system

At the General Plan level it is not appropriate, nor useful, to model emissions, or to otherwise attempt to calculate emissions from construction. The overall impacts of the Draft Plan are assessed in terms of consistency with the most recent Clean Air Plan (refer to Section 5.9). However, it can be surmised from existing information and from the Draft Plan that a number of proposed developments will exceed short-term emissions standards set for construction. Such projects would generally disturb greater than four acres of land, or would require substantial excavation of material. Impacts are therefore considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

Safety and Noise Policy 8C. Encourage use of electric (rather than gasoline-powered) equipment and natural gas appliances, including outdoor grills.

*Safety and Noise Program 8.2. Enforce air pollution control measures during construction.*

*Safety and Noise Program 8.6. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require natural gas connections and exterior electrical outlets.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are recommended.

#### **Residual Impacts**

The Draft Plan contains Program 8.2, which specifically ensures the enforcement of pollution control measures during construction. However, implementation of such measures is not always sufficient to

reduce emissions levels to less than significant levels, especially on large projects. Impacts are therefore considered significant and unavoidable.

**Geology and Soils.** Projects constructed under the Draft Plan may adversely affect soil stability, leading to increased risk of erosion and landslide. Projects may also encounter unstable soil conditions, such as expansivity, which need to be addressed through design and engineering. Impacts regarding landslide potential and expansivity are more appropriately addressed at the project-specific level, as site conditions largely dictate the potential for impact. However, reasonable speculation can be made that construction of projects may result in increased potential for erosion. Impacts are considered potentially significant.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

**Safety and Noise Goal 3. Reduce potential harm to people and property from geologic/seismic hazards.**

Safety and Noise Policy 3B. Avoid development in areas at risk for slope failure, and ensure that hillside developments employ appropriate design and construction techniques.

*Safety and Noise Program 3.1. Adopt and enforce the most recently state approved building code provisions necessary to promote seismic safety in structural designs, including regulations relating to grading and construction relative to seismic hazards, liquefaction potential, and development on sloping ground.*

*Safety and Noise Program 3.2. Require geotechnical studies for development in areas with moderate to high liquefaction potential that include analysis of seismic settlement potential and specify appropriate mitigation.*

*Safety and Noise Program 3.3. Continue to require slope stability assessments by appropriate registered professionals upon*

*the initiation of new development proposals in areas of known slope instability and/or on slopes steeper than 15 percent.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are recommended.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to policies and programs contained in the draft General Plan.

**Water Quality and Hydrology.** Projects constructed under the Draft Plan may adversely affect water quality and hydrology by altering current flow patterns and reducing infiltration. Development often results in increased impermeable surfaces, which concentrate flows and redistribute infiltration patterns.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

*Community Development Program 21.2. Comply with directives from environmental regulatory authorities to update the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances, standards and regulations to incorporate stormwater quality and watershed protection measures to limit impacts to aquatic ecosystems and preserve and restore the beneficial uses of natural water bodies in the city.*

#### **Mitigation Measures**

The following program will be added:

"For new development, consider alternatives to impermeable surfaces that will promote gradual infiltration of precipitation."

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan, and amendments above.

**Noise.** Construction of projects may result in short-term noise audible to sensitive

receptors, including residences, libraries, and office buildings. Construction noise and its duration varies widely, therefore, standards for acceptable noise levels associated with construction are difficult to establish. Generally, jurisdictions set hours during which construction is acceptable, and respond to specific complaints.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

None of the Draft Plan policies or programs specifically addresses construction noise. However, the City's Noise Ordinance (Section 35-16.14 et seq. of the Municipal Code) establishes performance standards for noise, which include the following:

"(A)(3). **Noise attenuation measures.** The zoning administrator may require the incorporation into a project of any noise attenuation measures deemed necessary to ensure that noise standards are not exceeded."

Standards for exposure and generation of noise are contained in Section 5-1 of the Municipal Code.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

No additional measures are required.

#### **Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to policies and programs contained in the Draft Plan and Municipal Code.

#### **Traffic**

The implementation of the Draft Plan will result in short-term impacts associated with truck haul routes, detours, physical street disturbance, and other consequences of construction that will affect traffic volumes and traffic safety.

#### **Policies which Address Potential Impacts**

None.

#### **Mitigation Measures**



Amend the Draft Plan as follows:

"Require developers to establish comprehensive construction traffic plans which denote haul routes, detours, and other factors which may impact public safety for approval by City staff."

**Residual Impacts**

Impacts are considered less than significant due to mitigation above.

## 6. GROWTH-INDUCING AND SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE EFFECTS

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### Growth-Inducing Impacts

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126(g)) require that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impact of a proposed action. The Guidelines define a growth-inducing impact as “the way in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are [public works] projects that would remove obstacles to population growth. Growth is not assumed to be necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.”

The environmental effects of a proposed project’s induced growth are secondary or indirect impacts. Secondary effects of growth can result in significant increased demand on community and public service infrastructures, an increase in traffic, noise, degradation of air and water quality, and agricultural land conversion to urbanized uses.

The policies and land use categories in the Pleasant Hill General Plan would guide future growth in the area through the year 2025. Implementation of the Draft Plan is intended to not specifically induce growth but to manage and plan for new development. The Draft Plan includes many policies to encourage orderly growth.

Buildout under the Draft Plan would foster economic and population growth because the plan’s purpose is to guide the development of the area until at least the year 2025. Further, the construction of additional housing is encouraged by the Draft Plan because the proposed plan sets forth guidelines that are intended to encourage the construction of additional housing in compliance with the policies of the plan.

Population growth in the area would also require an expansion of services such as police and fire protection, schools, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal. These issues are discussed in Section 5.9, “Public Services”. Measure C regulates provision of adequate services.

### Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes which will Result from the Proposed Plan

According to Section 15126(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this section is to “describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.”

Significant unavoidable impacts identified in this EIR are limited to air quality impacts associated with construction projects, and traffic noise along Contra Costa Boulevard.

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify any significant irreversible changes associated with a proposed project. Such changes typically include use of non-renewable resources or land use changes that would preclude other types of development in the future.

Continued development of the planning area in accordance with the draft plan would result in a permanent change as urbanization continues on land that is presently vacant or underutilized. Although these changes will be permanent, they are not considered adverse. The irreversible commitment of non-renewable resources includes, but is not limited to:

- The conversion of vacant land to urban uses within existing urban areas.

- The conversion of agricultural land to other non-agricultural uses.
- The consumption of building materials for roads, structures and infrastructure.
- The continued use of energy resources for heating and transportation.

None of the secondary impacts of increased urbanization is considered a significant irreversible adverse environmental impact.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

The CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines cumulative impacts as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts”. Further, “the cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time”.

As a practical matter, an EIR on a general plan is an assessment of the cumulative impacts of development within the area covered by the plan. A general plan is considered a planning document that is designed to evaluate areawide conditions. The Draft Plan sets forth the goals, policies, assumptions, guidelines, and implementation measures that will guide development of the area to at least the year 2025; this EIR evaluates the impacts of such development.

The cumulative effects of growth under the Draft Plan include the following:

- An increase in the number of dwelling units and a loss of agricultural land in the planning area;
- Inducement of growth in the planning area by providing guidance for growth until 2025;

- An increase in population;
- An increase in dwelling units;
- An increase in traffic;
- An increase in demand for water resources;
- An increase in air emissions; and,
- An increase in traffic noise;

Most of the mitigation measures proposed and recommended to reduce significant impacts are goals and policies that apply to the entire planning area. Most of the cumulative impacts associated with development of the planning area would be mitigated through implementation of the goals and policies of the proposed plan.

## 7. ALTERNATIVES

CEQA requires the consideration of a range of reasonable alternatives to the Draft Plan. This section identifies the reasonable alternatives to the Draft Plan. The alternatives are analyzed for impacts to the environment, and are compared to the Draft Plan to determine the “environmentally superior alternative.”

### Rationale for Alternative Selection

The City of Pleasant Hill is largely built out; approximately 60 acres of vacant land (or 1.6% of the total acreage), spread amongst 71 parcels, remains. The relatively small number of vacant parcels in the City limited land use alternatives that could be evaluated during the General Plan development process. The following key locations for development or redevelopment were identified early in the process and were the focus of planning efforts:

- ✍ *Contra Costa Boulevard – Redevelopment with retail and services uses; allow for Mixed Use.*
- ✍ *Contra Costa Shopping Center (former Ward’s site) – Redesignation from Commercial and Retail to Mixed Use*
- ✍ *DVC Plaza (K-Mart) Shopping Center – Retain neighborhood retail, and encourage college-related uses as well as open space along the Contra Costa Canal.*
- ✍ *Mangini/Delu Property – Allow single-family housing under the current zoning.*
- ✍ *Former Oak Park Elementary School Site – Devote the majority to flood retention and green space, and allow up to 96 residential units.*

Alternatives were developed for these sites through citizen task forces and analysis by

City staff. Alternatives generally fell into three categories:

- ? Greater emphasis on commercial use
- ? Greater emphasis on residential use
- ? Retention as open space

The alternatives analyzed in this section are consistent with the categories listed above.

**No Project (Existing General Plan Land Use and Conservation/Open Space Elements).** CEQA requires the analysis of the no project alternative. When analyzing a General Plan as the project in an EIR, the no project alternative consists of continued growth and development under the existing planning framework [§15126.6(e)(3)(A)]. This alternative represents the continued growth and development of the City under the existing General Plan. Under this alternative, the buildout population of the City would be approximately 34,355.

Development under the existing General Plan is compared with existing conditions in *Table 18*, below.

Table 18. Existing Conditions vs. Existing General Plan - Development and Population		
Unit/Square Footage Type	Existing	Additional Units – Existing GP
SF Units	8,571	232
MF Units	4,835	454
Commercial Sq. Ft.	3,971,456	162,043
Light Industrial Sq. Ft.	365,043	0
Total Population	32,837*	34,355
<b>Source:</b> Pleasant Hill Community Development Department, 2001, unless noted * 2000 Census		

Continued implementation of the existing General Plan would result in the following changes from existing conditions:

- ? 232 additional single family units
- ? 454 additional multi-family units
- ? 162,043 additional square feet of commercial space
- ? 1,518 additional people

The existing General Plan is compared with the Draft Plan in terms of land use distribution in *Table 19*.

**Table 19. 1990 General Plan (amended to date) vs. Draft Plan – Land Use Distribution**

Land Use Designation	Parcels	Acres	% of Total Acreage	Change from Draft Plan
SF Low	399	316.4	8.2%	0
SF Medium	4,025	1,355.5	35.1%	0
SF High	4,204	796.0	21%	6.3
<i>Single-Family Subtotal</i>	<i>8,628</i>	<i>2,467.9</i>	<i>64%</i>	
MF Very Low	0	0	0%	(82.9)
MF Low	1,380	126.9	3.3%	76.6
MF Medium	883	83.3	2.2%	0
MF High	11	12.7	0.2%	(3.9)
<i>Multi-Family Subtotal</i>	<i>2,274</i>	<i>222.9</i>	<i>5.8%</i>	
Commercial & Retail	279	239.9	6.2%	101.3
Neighborhood Business	0	0	0%	(22.8)
Office	98	84.2	2.2%	0
Mixed Use	175	42.6	1.1%	(74.6)
Light Industrial	20	34.2	0.8%	0
Park	26	154.8	4%	0
Open Space	15	252.8	6.5%	0
Semi-public & Inst.	53	107.5	2.8%	0
School	19	254.4	6.6%	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,587</b>	<b>3,861.2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0</b>

Continued implementation of the existing General Plan would result in the following changes in the buildout scenario when compared to the Draft Plan:

- ? The Multi-Family Very Low land use category does not exist in the 1990 General Plan; instead, 76.6 acres are captured under the Multi Family Low designation and 6.3 acres are captured under the Single Family High designation.
- ? The Neighborhood Business land use category does not exist; acreage is instead captured under a more general Commercial and Retail category.
- ? The existing General Plan devotes 74.6 fewer acres to Mixed Use, and 3.9 fewer acres to Multi-Family High.

The existing General Plan is compared to the Draft Plan in terms of development potential in *Table 20*.

The existing General Plan allows for fewer multi-family units, less commercial square feet, and a lower total population than the Draft Plan. The existing General Plan places less emphasis overall on Mixed Use.

**Table 20. Draft Plan vs. Existing General Plan - Development and Population**

Unit/Square Footage Type	Potential – Existing GP	Potential – Draft Plan	Difference
SF Units	8,803	8,803	0
MF Units	5,289	6,157	(868)
Commercial Sq. Ft	4,498,542	4,801,542	(303,000)
Light Industrial Sq. Ft.	365,043	365,043	0
Total Population	34,355	36,092	(1,737)
<b>Source:</b> Pleasant Hill Community Development Department, 2001			

The impacts of the existing General Plan are analyzed in reference to *existing conditions* in the following paragraphs:

**Agriculture.** Agricultural land in the City of Pleasant Hill is limited to the Mangini/Delu property. The existing General Plan applies residential land use designations to the Mangini property, and could therefore result in the conversion of agricultural land. The agricultural commissioner's office determined for reasons outlined in Section 5.4 that impacts associated with conversion of this land are less than significant.

**Air Quality.** Continued implementation of the existing General Plan would result in construction and/or redevelopment of approximately 4 acres of commercial space and 686 residential units. Construction activities would likely exceed air quality thresholds in the short term. Impacts are considered significant, and unavoidable.

Continued implementation of the existing General Plan would be consistent with the adopted Clean Air Plan (CAP) in that

population growth rates would not exceed those projected in the CAP. It is unlikely that the existing General Plan addresses buffers for odors and toxics, impacts are potentially significant but mitigable in that regard.

It is unclear whether the existing General Plan adequately addresses the issue of VMT as related to population growth. The existing General Plan places less of an emphasis on Mixed Use, an important component of VMT reduction. The existing General Plan does contain, however, policies and programs related to improvement of alternative transportation facilities and opportunities. Impacts are therefore considered potentially significant, but mitigable.

*Biological Resources.* Biological resources are limited to creek channels, scattered oak woodland and grassland chaparral occurring in Paso Nogal Park. Development under the existing General Plan may impact such resources indirectly through intensification of land use, and the resulting noise, and light. The existing General Plan contains policies that aim to reduce impacts to biological resources. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Cultural Resources.* Construction of additional development may impact archaeological and historical resources. The existing General Plan contains policies that address cultural resources. Impacts are considered significant but mitigable through additions to policy language.

*Geologic and Seismic Hazards.* Construction of residential units may place additional persons and property at risk in the event of a geologic or seismic catastrophe. The existing General Plan contains policies that address seismic and geologic hazards. Impacts are considered less than significant.

*Hydrology and Water Quality.* Continued construction under the existing General Plan would result in increases in impermeable surfaces and runoff that may adversely affect hydrology and water quality in the City. The existing General Plan contains

policies that address potential runoff impacts. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Noise.* Growth in the City under the existing General Plan would result in increased vehicle trips that would increase noise along area roadways, although not at a level generally perceptible to area residents. The existing General Plan contains policies that address noise increases. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Public Services.* Growth under the existing General Plan would increase demand for public services. The existing General Plan contains the mandated Growth Management Element that provides for review of a project's impact on public services and provision of adequate services prior to development. Impacts are considered mitigated by the inclusion of this Growth Management Element.

*Recreation.* Please refer to the discussion regarding Public Services; impacts to recreational facilities (i.e., parks) would be mitigated by the Growth Management Element.

*Traffic and Circulation.* Continued development in the City under the existing General Plan would increase vehicle trips in the community and create new areas of vehicle concentration (such as the Mangini property). Traffic improvements are included as a factor in the Growth Management Element. Impacts are therefore considered significant, but mitigated.

The impacts of the existing General Plan are compared to impacts of the Draft Plan in *Table 21*.

### **Economic Intensification Alternative**

The Economic Intensification alternative consists of a greater emphasis on commercial development. This alternative essentially reduces the residential land use assumptions for mixed-use areas (from 25% to 10%).

The areas along Contra Costa Boulevard, at the Contra Costa Shopping Center and DVC Plaza, represent the major commercial centers in Pleasant Hill. Land use in these areas is largely commercial in nature. The Draft Plan proposes an increase in acreage covered by the mixed-use designation in these areas. The mixed-use designation allows for multi-family dwelling units interspersed with commercial facilities.

The Economic Intensification alternative would focus on the development of commercial land use with fewer residential units. This alternative would result in 740 fewer residential units than proposed in the Draft Plan, and would increase the potential for commercial development by 8.75 acres, for a total of approximately 20 acres, a roughly 20% increase over existing conditions. Total population would decrease by 1,517 people compared to the Draft Plan.

*Agriculture.* Agricultural land in the City of Pleasant Hill is limited to the Mangini/Delu property. This alternative would have no effect on the land use designation currently applied to the site, although it could result in conversion of the land from agricultural to residential use. Impacts are considered less than significant due to the findings of the agricultural commissioner's office.

*Air Quality.* This alternative would increase commercial development while reducing the overall population potential. Construction activities would likely exceed air quality thresholds in the short term. Impacts are considered significant.

Implementation of this alternative would be consistent with the adopted CAP in that population growth rates would not exceed those projected in the CAP. Impacts associated with buffers and toxics are considered significant but mitigable. The implementation of this alternative would result in reduced home-based vehicle trips when compared with the Draft Plan, but would increase work-related trips.

The Economic Intensification Alternative reduces residential uses in the commercial centers, which is an important factor in reducing VMT, but it may improve the balance of jobs to housing by providing more local jobs. Impacts associated with consistency with the CAP are considered significant but mitigable.

*Biological Resources.* Biological resources are limited to creek channels, scattered oak woodland and grassland chaparral in Paso Nogal Park. Development under the Economic Intensification Alternative may impact such resources indirectly through intensification of land use, noise, and light. Impacts are considered significant but mitigable, assuming application of policies similar to those contained in the Draft Plan.

*Cultural Resources.* Construction may impact archaeological and historical resources. The Draft Plan contains policies that address cultural resources. The Economic Intensification Alternative would not change the significance of this impact. Impacts are considered mitigated by Draft Plan policies.

*Geologic and Seismic Hazards.* Construction may place additional persons and property at risk in the event of a geologic or seismic catastrophe. The Draft Plan contains policies that address seismic and geologic hazards, including landslides. The Economic Intensification alternative would not result in changes to such policies. Impacts are considered less than significant due to the inclusion of such policies.

*Hydrology and Water Quality.* Construction under the Economic Intensification Alternative would result in increases in impermeable surfaces and runoff that may adversely affect hydrology and water quality in the City. The Draft Plan contains policies that address potential runoff impacts. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Noise.* Growth under this alternative would result in increased work-related vehicle trips that would increase noise along area



roadways. Increases in ADT of 75% are required before an audible change in the noise level is perceived. Commercial land uses typically have higher trip generation rates than residential uses. However, commercial land uses would increase only 20% over existing conditions under this alternative; although trip generation rates vary widely among commercial uses, increases are not expected to be sufficient to result in an audible change in the noise level. Moreover, this alternative would retain policy language proposed in the Draft Plan that addresses noise. Impacts are considered less than significant.

*Public Services.* Growth under this alternative would increase demand for public services. However, this alternative would reduce the number of residential dwelling units and the total buildout population of the City, reducing the projected demand for public services when compared to the Draft Plan.

The Draft Plan contains the mandated Growth Management Element that provides for review of a project's impact on public services and provision of adequate services prior to development. Impacts are considered mitigated by the inclusion of this Growth Management Element.

*Recreation.* Please refer to the discussion regarding Public Services; the Growth Management Element mitigates impacts to recreational facilities (i.e., parks).

*Traffic and Circulation.* The implementation of this alternative would reduce the number of home-based trips in the City. However, this alternative would result in an increase in work- and shopping-related trips as commuters and shoppers from other communities travel into the City for business. Impacts are considered significant, but mitigated by the policies contained in the Growth Management Element.

The impacts of the Economic Intensification Alternative are compared to impacts of the Draft Plan in *Table 21*.

## Residential Infill Alternative

This alternative results in more intensive infill of residential land uses in areas proposed for mixed use under the Draft Plan. This alternative promotes increased residential infill assumptions for mixed use areas, and in particular increases residential unit counts at the Contra Costa Shopping center based on alternatives analyzed by a citizen task force, and increases the unit count on the Mangini/Delu property to 230 units (170 more units than the Draft Plan proposes).

*Contra Costa Shopping Center.* The preferred alternative for the Contra Costa Shopping Center (as developed by the Task Force) includes realignment of Buskirk Avenue, 303,000 square feet of commercial/office space, 390 multi-family units and traffic improvements such as signals and new access points.

The task force analyzed one alternative to this proposal: widening Buskirk Avenue in its existing location, and changing the land use mix to 12+/- acres of infill residential (and 8+/- acres of mixed use. This alternative would also include traffic improvements such as signals and new access points.

Based on application of the most intensive land use designations, this alternative would result in 560 multi-family residential units and 4.5 acres (196,020 square feet) of commercial space.<sup>28</sup>

*Mixed Use Assumptions.* The Draft Plan buildout assumes that 25% of mixed-use parcels will be developed with residential land uses. This alternative increases assumptions to 35%, resulting in 31 additional units in the mixed-use category.

*Mangini/Delu.* The Draft Plan proposes 60 single-family units on this site. This alternative applies a Very Low Density Multi-Family designation to the site, yielding 230 units or 170 more than the Draft Plan proposes.

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<sup>28</sup> Any development proposed for the Contra Costa Shopping Center site will be required to prepare a Specific Plan prior to approval.

This alternative would result in 371 additional multi-family residential units or 761 additional people over the Draft Plan.

*Agriculture.* This alternative would not change the density or proposed land use mix on the Mangini/Delu property; impacts are considered less than significant.

*Air Quality.* Construction activities under this alternative would likely exceed air quality thresholds in the short term. Impacts are considered significant.

This alternative contains more multi-family potential when compared to the Draft Plan, which is an important factor in reducing VMT. The alternative is consistent with the CAP in terms of population projections, and language concerning odors and toxics could be added. Impacts are considered significant but mitigable.

*Biological Resources.* Development under this alternative may impact biological resources indirectly through intensification of development, noise, and light. The Draft Plan contains policies that aim to reduce impacts to biological resources. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Cultural Resources.* Construction may impact archaeological and historical resources. The Draft Plan contains policies that address cultural resources. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Geologic and Seismic Hazards.* Construction of residential units may place additional persons and property at risk in the event of a geologic or seismic catastrophe. The Draft Plan contains policies that address seismic and geologic hazards, including landslides. Impacts are considered less than significant.

*Hydrology and Water Quality.* Construction under this alternative would result in increases in impermeable surfaces and runoff that may adversely affect hydrology and water quality in the City. The Draft Plan contains policies that address potential

runoff impacts. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Noise.* The residential infill alternative would result in increased vehicle trips that would increase noise along area roadways. This alternative would not change policies that address noise increases. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Public Services.* Growth under this alternative would increase demand for public services. The alternative would contain the mandated Growth Management Element that provides for review of a project's impact on public services and provision of adequate services prior to development. Impacts are considered mitigated by the inclusion of this Growth Management Element.

*Recreation.* Please refer to the discussion regarding Public Services; the Growth Management Element mitigates impacts to recreational facilities (i.e., parks).

*Traffic and Circulation.* Development under this alternative would increase vehicle trips in the community and create new areas of vehicle concentration (for example, the Mangini property). Traffic improvements are included as a factor in the Growth Management Element. Individual impacts are therefore considered mitigated; cumulative impacts are not considerable because development under this alternative would be required to pay its fair share towards improvements. Impacts are considered less than significant.

The impacts of the Residential Infill alternative are compared to impacts of the Draft Plan in *Table 21*.

### **Reduced Density/Open Space Alternative**

Two large properties in Pleasant Hill are not developed with urban uses:

#### *Mangini/Delu Property*

The Mangini-Delu property is currently used for agricultural production and seasonal

activities. The Draft Plan proposes to retain the existing single-family designation on the site, yielding 60 units.

*Redesignation as Open Space/Parkland.* Neighbors of the Mangini/Delu property have requested that the property be retained as parkland or open space if the property ceases agricultural operations. This alternative would result in 23 acres of open space or parkland, and effectively retain the existing development pattern.

#### *Former Oak Park Elementary School Site*

The Draft Plan calls for 96 dwelling units, recreational fields and a flood detention basin on this site. Alternatives to this proposal include:

- ? No Residential (Recreation and Flood Control Only)
- ? Forty dwelling units plus facilities for recreation and flood control.

Alternative development scenarios for these two sites were combined to yield a reduced density/open space alternative resulting in 60-156 fewer dwelling units when compared to the Draft Plan. This alternative results in 141-338 fewer persons than projected under the Draft Plan (35,754 – 35,951 persons total).

*Agriculture.* This alternative would eliminate development on the Magini/Delu property. Impacts are less than significant.

*Air Quality.* This alternative would result in the reduction of emissions associated with construction. However, emissions would likely exceed air quality thresholds in the short term. Impacts are considered significant.

The alternative is consistent with the CAP in terms of population projections, and language concerning odors and toxics could be added. It is not clear whether this alternative would impact VMT. Impacts are considered significant but mitigable.

*Biological Resources.* This alternative would result in the elimination of housing in an area

proximate to the creek. The Draft Plan contains policies that aim to reduce impacts to biological resources. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Cultural Resources.* Construction may impact archaeological and historical resources. The Draft Plan contains policies that address cultural resources. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Geologic and Seismic Hazards.* Any additional residential construction may place additional persons and property at risk in the event of a geologic or seismic catastrophe. The Draft Plan contains policies that address seismic and geologic hazards, including landslides. Impacts are considered less than significant.

*Hydrology and Water Quality.* Construction under any alternative would result in increases in impermeable surfaces and runoff that may adversely affect hydrology and water quality in the City. The Draft Plan contains policies that address potential runoff impacts. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Noise.* Implementation of this alternative would result in a reduced potential for traffic increases and resulting vehicular noise. Regardless, the Draft Plan contains policies that address noise increases. Impacts are considered mitigated by such policies.

*Public Services.* Growth under this alternative would increase demand for public services, although it would result in lower total demand for services. The Draft Plan contains the mandated Growth Management Element that provides for review of a project's impact on public services and provision of adequate services prior to development. Impacts are considered mitigated by the inclusion of this Growth Management Element.

*Recreation.* Implementation of this alternative would result in increased passive recreational opportunities in the City. Impacts are beneficial.

*Traffic and Circulation.* Continued development in the City under this alternative would increase vehicle trips in the community. Traffic improvements are included as a factor in the Growth Management Element. Individual impacts are therefore considered mitigated; cumulative impacts of regional traffic growth are not considerable because projects developed under this alternative are required to pay their fair share of improvements.

The impacts of the Reduced Density/Open Space alternative are compared to impacts of the Draft Plan in *Table 21*.

Table 21. Comparison of Draft Plan Alternatives					
Resources	No Project – Existing General Plan	A – Economic Intensification Alternative	B – Residential Infill Alternative	C – Reduced Density/Open Space Alternative	Draft Plan
Population	34,355	34,575	36,853	35,754-35,951	36,092
Agriculture					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Similar	Similar	Similar	Less	
Significance	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	No Impact	
Discussion	Implementation of each of the alternatives except for Alternative C would have similar effects on the Magini/Delu property. Alternative C would retain the property in open space if agricultural operations were to cease.				
Air Quality					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Less	More	More	Less	
Significance	Significant but Mitigable	Significant but Mitigable	Significant but Mitigable	Significant but Mitigable	
Discussion	Each of the alternatives would impact air quality at the construction and cumulative level. None would achieve a reduction in significance when compared to the Draft Plan.				
Biological Resources					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Significance	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	
Discussion	Each of the alternatives would have a similar impact on biological resources when compared to the Draft Plan. Although Alternative C would result in increased open space, biological resources are limited in the City and the overall impact remains similar to the Draft Plan.				
Cultural Resources					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Significance	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	Significant, but mitigable	
Discussion	The City has a high potential for occurrence of cultural resources. Each of the alternatives has a similar potential to impact such resources. Since the locations of cultural resources are not known, it cannot be determined if one alternative would have less of an impact than the others would.				
Geologic and Seismic Hazards					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Significance	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	
Discussion	Impacts associated with geologic and seismic hazards would be similar under each alternative. The entire state of California is considered seismically active; risks would not be substantially reduced under any one alternative. Geologic hazards are effectively mitigated by the application of the Uniform Building Code; impacts are likewise not reduced under any one alternative.				
Hydrology and Water Quality					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar	
Significance	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	

Table 21. Comparison of Draft Plan Alternatives					
Resources	No Project – Existing General Plan	A – Economic Intensification Alternative	B – Residential Infill Alternative	C – Reduced Density/Open Space Alternative	Draft Plan
Discussion	Impacts associated with hydrology and water quality are similar among the alternatives. Alternative C would reduce the total developed area in the City, but would not substantially reduce impacts when compared with the other alternatives.				
Noise					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Less	More	More	Less	
Significance	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	
Discussion	Permanent noise is generally associated with vehicular sources. Commercial land uses generate more vehicular trips than residential land uses, therefore, Alternative A, which increases commercial acreage, has more of an impact when compared to the Draft Plan. Alternative C also has the potential to increase traffic when compared with the Draft Plan because it results in increased population. The other alternatives, because they result in reductions in population when compared with the Draft Plan, and similar or less commercial space, result in less of an impact.				
Public Services					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Less	Less	More	Less	
Significance	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	
Discussion	Demand for public services increases with overall growth, however, the highest demand generally comes from residential land uses. Alternative B, which results in intensified residential use, has more of an impact than the Draft Plan. The other alternatives, which result in lower total population than the Draft Plan, have less of an impact on public services. Impacts are less than significant across the board because of the Growth Management Element, which requires adequate services be provided prior to development approval.				
Recreation					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Less	Less	More	Less	
Significance	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Beneficial	
Discussion	Impacts to recreation result from increased pressure on existing recreational facilities, resulting in wear and tear or the need to build additional facilities. Impacts are generally greater as population increases in an area with existing facilities. Therefore, Alternative B has a greater impact while the No Project Alternative and Alternative A have less of an impact. Alternative C has a beneficial impact because it provides additional recreational space while reducing population potential.				
Traffic and Circulation					
Impact Compared to Draft Plan	Less	More	More	Less	
Significance	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than significant	Less than Significant	
Discussion	Each of the alternatives would increase traffic over existing conditions. Alternatives A and B would result in additional commercial square feet and residents, respectively, and would increase traffic. The No Project Alternative and Alternative C would result in less development overall, and would therefore result in less traffic impacts. Impacts for all alternatives are less than significant because all include the Growth Management				

Table 21. Comparison of Draft Plan Alternatives					
Resources	No Project – Existing General Plan	A – Economic Intensification Alternative	B – Residential Infill Alternative	C – Reduced Density/Open Space Alternative	Draft Plan
	Element, which address traffic impacts on an incremental level.				

## **Conclusion**

In general, greater emphasis on commercial land use decreases demand for public services, and potentially increases traffic, noise and air quality impacts.

Greater emphasis on residential land uses increases demand for public services, and decreases traffic, noise, and air quality impacts.

## **Alternatives Previously Considered but Rejected**

None.

## **Environmentally Superior Alternative.**

Based on the analysis contained in the EIR, the Reduced Density/Open Space alternative is considered the Environmentally Superior Alternative.



## 8. LIST OF PREPARERS AND PERSONS CONTACTED

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### Preparers

*Crawford Multari & Clark Associates*

Nicole Phillips, Environmental Specialist

*City of Pleasant Hill*

Richard T. Bottarini, Director, Community Development Department

Steve Kersevan, Public Works Department

Casey McCann, Senior Planner, Community Development Department

Todd Teachout, Public Works Department

### Personal Communications

Martin Englemann, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, November 27, December 10 and 12, 2002 (e-mail and phone)

Terry Shoaf, Diablo Valley College, July 2, 2002 (e-mail)

Bob Berggren, Director, Pleasant Hill Park and Recreation District, October 23, 2002, (e-mail)

Larry Yost, Agricultural Commissioner's Office, November 5, 2002, (phone)

Louie Gonzales, City Public Affairs Officer, November 18, 2002 (phone and e-mail)

Jeff Quimby, Contra Costa Water District, November 26, and December 5, 2002 (e-mail)

Staff, Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal, November 18, 2002 (phone)

Norm Christianson, Manager, Pleasant Hill Bayshore Disposal, November 18, 2002 (phone)

Russ Leavitt, AICP, Management Analyst, Central Contra Costa Sanitary District, November 27, 2002 (phone)

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